Eyewitness Accounts of
the American Revolution

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Eyewitness Accounts of the American Revolution

The History of the Origin, Progress, and Termination of the American War

C. Stedman

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND TERMINATION

OF THE

AMERICAN WAR.

By C. STEDMAN,

WHO SERVED UNDER SIR W. HOWE, SIR H. CLINTON, AND
THE MARQUIS CORNWALLIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1794.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF MOIRA.

MY LORD,

THE pain of recording that spirit of faction, that weakness, indecision, indolence, luxury, and corruption, which disgraced our public conduct during the course of the American war, is relieved by the contemplation of those talents and virtues that were eminently displayed on the side of Great Britain, in various important, though subordinate, stations.

Although the issue of that war was unfortunate, our national character was not impaired, nor the contest, while

it

it was maintained, on the whole inglorious. Neither martial ardour was wanting among our countrymen, nor military enterpriſe, nor patriotic zeal. In that rank, and those circumstances of life which are at once a temptation and an apology for dissipation and a love of pleasure, the military spirit of Britain shone forth with undiminished lustre; and the noblest families exhibited bright examples of true courage, exalted genius, and consummate wisdom.

Whilst I indulge with exultation this general reflection, permit me to acknowledge that my attention is irresistibly drawn towards the Earl of Moira. Accept, then, my Lord, this humble effort to transmit to posterity the glorious actions of our countrymen, as a mark of personal reſpect for your Lordſhip; for that happy union of enthusiasm in the cause of virtue, of invention, intrepidity, and decision of character, with cool reflection and patient perseverance, which directs the public eye to your Lordship, as the hope and the pride of your country.

That your Lordſhip may long live still to sustain in a frivolous age, the dignity of true nobility, the virtue of chivalry without its spirit of romance, is the ardent wish and hope of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

And most humble Servant,

C. STEDMAN.

Denham, Bucks,
Jan. 1, 1794.

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HISTORY

OF THE

AMERICAN WAR.

INTRODUCTION.

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SO natural is the love of liberty, and ſuch the averſion of mankind to reſtraint, that it ſeems to be in the very nature of colonies, and all ſubordinate governments, to ſeize every favourable opportunity of aſſerting their independence; and the external aſpect of nature, variegated and broken by mountains, ſavannahs, rivers, lakes, and ſeas, conſpires with that noble paſſion to check the progreſs of empire, and to maintain an intereſting diverſity among tribes and nations.

But when the Britiſh colonies, now the Thirteen United States of North America, took up arms, and declared themſelves free and independent, they were not encouraged by any conjuncture that could juſtify that meaſure in point of policy, or by any circumſtances that could yield any reaſonable hope of ſucceſs in the arduous ſtruggle that was to enſue. On the contrary, if we take a

Introduction. view of the ſtrength and reſources of Great Britain at the commencement of hoſtilities, and contraſt theſe with the weakneſs and almoſt total inability of the revolting colonies, we ſhall have reaſon to conclude that the termination of the war in favour of the latter, with their final ſeparation from the Britiſh empire, was one of thoſe extraordinary and unexpected events, which in the courſe of human affairs rarely occur, and which bid defiance to all human foreſight and calculation. A people, not exceeding two millions of ſouls, widely ſcattered over half the weſtern hemiſphere, in the peaceable occupations of fiſhing, agriculture, and commerce; divided into many diſtinct governments; differing from each other in manners, religion, and intereſts, nor entirely united in political ſentiments; this people, with very little money, proverbially called the ſinews of war, was yet enabled to effect a final ſeparation from Great Britain, proud from ſucceſsful and glorious war, flouriſhing in arts and arms beyond the example of any former period; capable of raiſing an annual revenue of ſixteen millions of pounds; and, on the whole, the moſt formidable nation in the world: And all this, although the continent of North America, deeply indented and penetrated by navigable rivers and lakes, preſented a fit theatre for the diſplay of naval power, in which chiefly the ſtrength of Great Britain conſiſted. It is the object of the preſent Work to deſcribe with fidelity the war that involved this great event—a wonder to the preſent, and an example to all future ages. But I ſhall firſt run over the train of circumſtances by which that war was produced.

The colonies of New Hampſhire, Maſſachuſet's Bay, Rhode Iſland, Connecticut, New York, Penſylvania, the three lower counties on the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, the hiſtory of whoſe revolt it is propoſed to relate, are ſituated on the eaſtern coaſt of North America,

rica, where they are waſhed by the Atlantic Ocean, ranging from north to ſouth, in the order in which they have been enumerated. On the weſt they are ſeparated from the immenſe regions, not fully explored, of Canada and Louiſiana, by the Apalachian or Allegany mountains. The countries ſituated to the weſt of that magnificent barrier, and at a vaſt though unknown diſtance from the Pacific Ocean, are watered by mediterranean ſeas, called the Lakes of Canada, which not only communicate with each other, but ſend forth ſeveral great rivers, among which the Miſſiſſippi, and the St. Laurence, by the weight of their waters and the length of their courſe, are particularly diſtinguiſhed.

The Miſſiſſippi, running in a winding courſe near five thouſand miles from north to ſouth, and receiving in its progreſs the Illinois, the Miaſures, the Ohio, and other tributary rivers, ſcarcely inferior to the Rhine or the Danube, diſcharges itſelf in the Gulf of Mexico. The St. Laurence, on the contrary, ſtretching in a north-eaſterly direction from the Lakes of Canada, falls into the ocean near Newfoundland. All theſe, with the Hudſon, Delaware, Suſquehannah, Cheſapeak, Potowmack, and other noble rivers on the eaſtern ſide of North America, being navigable, for the moſt part, to their very heads, encourage and ſtimulate commerce in times of peace; but, in thoſe of war, expoſe the colonies to the attacks of a ſuperior naval force, as already mentioned.

The North American provinces lie between the thirtieth and fiftieth degrees of northern latitude, having about twelve hundred miles of ſea-coaſt. As ſuch a ſituation would denote a great degree of temperature, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that within thoſe bounds they experience much viciſſitude of weather, and higher degrees of heat and cold than are to be found in European climates ſimilarly ſituated.

The northern, commonly called the New England provinces, comprehending New Hampſhire, Maſſachuſet's Bay, Rhode Iſland,

and

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and Connecticut, are the leaſt fertile in point of ſoil; but their land produces excellent timber, and their ſeas abound with fiſh. The inhabitants here, as elſewhere, led by the hand of nature, employ themſelves in thoſe occupations which are ſuitable to the productions of their climate. Fiſhing is the buſineſs of ſome, ſhip-building of others; and the bulk of the people are more or leſs engaged in trade or navigation.

The ſoil of the New England province of Connecticut being richer than that of the others, its inhabitants are occupied in agriculture and raiſing of cattle; of which, and alſo of grain, conſiderable quantities are annually exported.

The productions of the colonies of New York, New Jerſey, Penſylvania, and the three lower counties on the Delaware, uſually called the Middle Colonies, reſemble thoſe of Connecticut; and their inhabitants are engaged in ſimilar occupations. Their moſt common articles of exportation are wheat and flour, with furs from New York.

As you proceed from Penſylvania to the ſouthward, the heat of ſummer becomes exceſſive; and the African alone can endure the labour of working in the fields. Hence it is, that in the ſouthern colonies the number of white inhabitants bears only a ſmall proportion to that of the negroes; whereas in the middle colonies very few, and in the northern ſcarcely any, Africans are to be found.

The provinces to the ſouthward of Penſylvania have been uſually called the Southern Colonies. In thoſe, almoſt all the white inhabitants are proprietors of lands, which they keep in their own poſſeſſion, and cultivate by means of ſlaves. Theſe land-owners, or planters, as they have been called, lead eaſy and luxurious lives, are fond of amuſements of all ſorts, and to labour and fatigue utter ſtrangers. The buſineſs of their plantations, and the management of the African cultivators, are committed to the care of

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of perſons called Overſeers; a ſort of middle men between proprietors of lands and the ſlaves who cultivate them. In the ſouthern provinces are raiſed the moſt valuable articles of commerce exported from North America: Tobacco in Virginia, Maryland, and a great part of North Carolina; and rice and indigo in South Carolina and Georgia.

The philoſopher, in travelling through thoſe regions, which were all originally peopled from Great Britain, the middle colonies excepted, will find amuſement in contemplating the effect which is produced upon the human frame and conſtitution by the influence of climate, of ſoil, and of the courſe of employment in which the inhabitants are engaged.

In the provinces of New England, where nature has been leſs bountiful in the productions of the earth, he will find a race of men, healthy, ſtrong, and vigorous; keen, penetrating, active, and enterpriſing, with a degree of dexterity and management in all the common affairs of life, which approaches to cunning and artifice, and ſuch as the habits and purſuits, not of a liberal and enlarged, but of a detailed and minute trade, are accuſtomed to form.

In the middle colonies, he will ſee farmers robuſt, frugal, perſevering, and induſtrious; plain and honeſt in their dealings, but of rude and unpliant manners; with little penetration and leſs knowledge.

And, in moſt of the ſouthern colonies, he will meet with a people of pallid complexion and ſwarthy hue, of form rather tall and ſlender, unfit and unaccuſtomed to labour, with an averſion to buſineſs, and a fondneſs for pleaſure and diſſipation; luxurious, ſhewy, and expenſive; yet ſenſible, ſhrewd, and intelligent; of open and friendly diſpoſitions, and in their houſes hoſpitable even to extremity. But this muſt be underſtood only of the ſea-coaſt and interior parts of the ſouthern colonies. For the frontiers of theſe, reaching far to the

Introduction. the weſtward, extending over various ridges of high mountains, and bordering upon the Indian country, are inhabited by a people unacquainted with luxury and refinement, active and vigorous, with minds fierce and intractable, and, in habits, bearing ſome reſemblance to their ſavage neighbours.

The inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, more than any others of the coloniſts, imitated, in dreſs, equipage, furniture, and modes and habits of life, the manners and cuſtoms of the people of England; and theſe circumſtances will account for the vaſt ſums due from thence to Britain.

The bulk of the natives of North Carolina are hardy and robuſt. Their chief employment conſiſts in hunting and rearing cattle; and their principal amuſement in ſhooting, for wagers, with rifles at a mark.

The natives of Georgia, from the influence of climate, were a poor, emaciated, debilitated, indolent, and death-like people; and like the inhabitants of South Carolina, ignorant, idle, and inactive.

But theſe are not the only differences that merit attention. There are others which are to be aſcribed, not to climate, ſoil, or employment, but to the principles and tenets, whether civil or religious, of the primary ſettlers, which, being handed down from father to ſon, may maintain their influence for many ages.

The colony of Virginia, which is the moſt ancient, was eſtabliſhed in the early part of the peaceable reign of James the Firſt, about the beginning of the ſeventeenth century. And, as the coloniſts by whom it was ſettled removed from their native country, not from any cauſe of uneaſineſs or diſſatisfaction with government, but urged merely by the ſpirit of adventure, propagated at that period from Portugal and Spain into other parts of Europe, it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed that they carried with them the prevailing notions and opinions of the times, which were peculiarly favourable to monarchy and high church government. So inveterate were thoſe principles amongſt this people, that Virginia was the laſt of all the Britiſh dominions that yielded to the ſucceſsful arms of Cromwell, and the firſt, too, that renounced obedience to his uſurped authority by proclaiming the reſtoration of King Charles the Second. And ſo uniform were the inhabitants in religious matters, that, until the middle of the preſent century, not a ſingle place of worſhip either for Roman Catholics or Proteſtant Diſſenters was any-where to be found within the colony.

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The northern colonies were planted about the end of the ſame reign, but not till England began to be torn with internal feuds and diſſenſions. Thoſe who planned and carried into execution the ſettlement of Maſſachuſet's Bay, which was the firſt of the New England colonies, were men who had either ſuffered, or expected to ſuffer, perſecution during the intolerant adminiſtration of archbiſhop Laud; puritans in religion, republicans in their notions of government, and of the ſame party and principles with thoſe who afterwards overturned the government of England in both church and ſtate, and brought their ſovereign to the block. To theſe ſettlers a charter was granted, empowering them to chuſe whatever form of government ſhould be moſt agreeable to themſelves, with only one reſervation, that their laws ſhould not be repugnant to thoſe of Great Britain. What motive could induce the king to grant a charter with powers ſo extraordinary and extenſive to a people ſo little favoured in that reign as the Puritans, it is not now eaſy to diſcover; unleſs it was meant as an enticement to encourage the emigration of thoſe reſtleſs ſpirits whoſe refractory conduct, machinations, and plots, had begun to give ſo much diſturbance to government. But, whatever was the motive, the meaſure produced a greater effect than had been foreſeen. Such numbers in a ſhort time withdrew to New England, that government, Introduction. in the following reign, was obliged to interpoſe, by forbidding all perſons to emigrate, except ſuch as were ſpecially licenſed.

The ſettlements at Maſſachuſet's Bay, reinforced by ſuch numbers from England, ſoon began to flouriſh. But ſcarcely had the new inhabitants taken entire poſſeſſion of the country which they were to occupy, when they fell into internal diſſenſions. The majority of the colony being Puritans, the preſbyterian mode of worſhip was declared to be the eſtabliſhed religion, to which all were required to conform. Having juſt eſcaped from perſecution themſelves, they, in their turn, became intolerant. A ſtrict compliance with religious ordinances was rigorouſly exacted; and the perſecution that followed, at length became ſo intolerable as to produce freſh emigrations from this infantine ſettlement. One claſs withdrew to New Hampſhire, another to Rhode Iſland, and a third to Connecticut, where they formed eſtabliſhments, and laid the foundations of their reſpective governments.

The tract of country which contains the provinces of New York, New Jerſey, with the three lower counties on the Delaware, was anciently called the New Netherlands; for the original ſettlers were Dutch and Swedes, in whoſe poſſeſſion it remained until it was conquered by the Engliſh in the reign of king Charles the Second, to whom the ſovereignty of it was finally ceded, and confirmed by the treaty of Breda in 1667. A grant of a great part of this tract of country, with full powers of ſovereignty, was made by Charles to his brother James duke of York, who afterwards ſold that diſtrict ſince called New Jerſey, to lord Berkely and ſir George Carteret, reſerving to himſelf only the province of New York; which province, on the acceſſion of that prince, reverted of courſe to the crown.

The remaining part of this ceded territory was granted by Charles the Second, towards the end of his reign, to William Penn, the celebrated Quaker, who gave it the name of Penſylvania. By Penn it

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was originally planted with a colony, conſiſting of perſons of his own religion, who fled from England to avoid the perſecutions to which they, though a quiet and inoffenſive people, in common with other ſectaries, were ſubjected. For his new ſettlement he compoſed a code of laws, of ſo equitable and liberal a ſpirit, and in all reſpects ſo well adapted to the ſituation of the coloniſts, that his name has deſervedly been tranſmitted to poſterity with thoſe of the moſt eminent legiſlators; and, under the influence of his wiſe inſtitutions, the colony proſpered greatly, and ſoon became one of the moſt flouriſhing of the Britiſh ſettlements.

The counties of Newcaſtle, Kent, and Suſſex, uſually called the three lower counties on the Delaware, forming a ſeparate eſtabliſhment, and electing an aſſembly for themſelves, are attached to the government of Penſylvania, by having the ſame governor.

Adjoining to Penſylvania, on the ſouth, is the province of Maryland; which, like its neighbouring ſtate, though at a different period, took its riſe from religious perſecution.

In the reign of Charles the Firſt, when, in conſequence of repeated addreſſes from both houſes of parliament, the king was obliged to enforce againſt the Roman Catholics the execution of thoſe penal and ſanguinary laws, which a more enlightened and liberal age has thought fit to repeal, Charles lord Baltimore, a Roman Catholic, and a favourite at court, obtained a grant of that part of Virginia which has ſince been called Maryland, as a place of refuge for himſelf, and his perſecuted brethren of the Roman religion. And, to the everlaſting diſgrace of that narrow-minded and intolerant age, it is recorded, that when he embarked for his new ſettlement, he was accompanied by no fewer than two hundred popiſh families, and many of theſe of diſtinction, who choſe to encounter the dangers of the ſea, the fury of ſavages, and all the multiplied inconveniences, evils, and hardſhips of a new, unexplored, and unſheltered country,

rather

rather than longer remain expoſed to the cruel oppreſſion of their unrelenting perſecutors. And in this manner was Maryland ſettled about the year 1635.

The firſt ſettlements in the provinces of North and South Carolina, originally compriſed in the ſame grant, under the general name of Carolina, were begun a few years after the reſtoration of king Charles the Second. A grant of them was made to ſeveral noblemen and perſons of rank, who employed the celebrated Mr. Locke to form a ſyſtem of government and code of laws for their new colony. But, however wiſe in theory thoſe inſtitutions might have been, it is nevertheleſs certain, that the ſettlement did not thrive under them, although ſupported by the wealth and influence of its rich and powerful proprietors: Nor did it even begin to proſper until government, many years afterwards, reſumed the grants, took the colony under its own immediate protection, laid aſide the inſtitutions of Mr. Locke, and gave the inhabitants a conſtitution ſimilar to that of Viriginia; and from that period its advances in improvement were as rapid as they had been before ſlow and unpromiſing. So complicated are human affairs, and ſo intricate the chain that unites the cauſe with the effect, that it is very unſafe, in the formation of political ſyſtems, to go far beyond the line of experience. The more exalted and refined our ideas of liberty and government, the wider they are apt to lead us aſtray; if, in oppoſition to facts and circumſtances, we obſtinately perſevere in endeavouring to reduce them to practice.

1763. At the end of the war with France, which concluded in 1763, there was, and there had been for near a century paſt, a ſmall revenue collected in the American colonies, which was ſubject to the diſpoſition of parliament. This revenue aroſe from duties impoſed by two acts of parliament, one in the 25th year of the reign of king Charles the Second, and the other in the ſixth year of the reign of king George the Second; in the firſt inſtance on goods exported from, and in the ſecond, on goods imported into, the colonies.

By the act of navigation, certain enumerated goods, *viz.* ſugar, tobacco, cotton wool, indigo ginger, fuſtic, and other dying wood, the produce of the plantations, were reſtrained from being carried from thence to any other place than to ſome of the other Britiſh plantations, or to Great Britain; and by the 25 Car. II. duties were impoſed upon theſe articles when carried to any other place than Great Britain, and conſequently upon ſuch of them as were exported to any of the other colonies; and theſe duties were to be paid before the goods were laden on board any ſhip for exportation.

At the time when this act paſſed, only one of theſe articles was produced on the continent of North America, which was tobacco; and upon the exportation of it to any of the other colonies, this duty was regularly paid and collected from that period down to the time of the ſeparation of the colonies from the mother-country; as was alſo the duty upon indigo, after it was introduced as an article of produce and exportation in the ſouthern colonies. The other enumerated articles upon which the duties were laid, were all of the produce of the Weſt India iſlands; and upon ſuch of them as the inhabitants of the North American colonies imported into their own country, the duties were regularly paid in the Weſt Indies, before they were laden on board the veſſels.

The duties impoſed by the 6 Geo. II. are thoſe which have been already mentioned payable on the importation of foreign rum, ſugar, and molaſſes, into the colonies. To thoſe the colonies alſo ſubmitted, except ſo far as they were eluded by clandeſtine importation.

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But this illicit importation, either from the remiſſneſs of the cuſtom-houſe officers in the colonies, or their inability to prevent it, was carried on, in the courſe of time, to ſuch an extent as not only to alarm the Weſt India planters, by its tendency to leſſen the demand for their produce, and to lower its price, but alſo to attract the attention of the Britiſh miniſtry, who, notwithſtanding the extent to which this trade was carried on, found the revenue ariſing from it very unproductive; and who were alſo given to underſtand, that through the ſame channel ſome of the manufactures of Europe, and many of the productions and manufactures of the Eaſt Indies, were introduced into the colonies, in breach of the act of navigation, and to the manifeſt injury of the trade of the mother-country.

Smuggling was carried on, not only upon the American, but upon the Britiſh and Iriſh coaſts alſo, to ſuch an extent, that the parliament, in this year, thought fit to paſs a new act for more effectually ſuppreſſing it; and the Britiſh miniſtry, ſeconding the views and intentions of the parliament, adopted a new plan for carrying the act into execution, and for checking the evil which it was intended to remedy, by calling in the aid of the officers of the navy. For this purpoſe a number of the ſmaller ſhips of war, with cutters and tenders, were put into commiſſion, and ſtationed in different quarters of the coaſts of Great Britain and Ireland; and to the officers who commanded them ſimilar powers were delegated with thoſe uſually granted to revenue officers, and they were alſo required to take an oath for the due performance of this part of their duty.

This regulation having taken place in Great Britain, it was alſo thought expedient to extend it to North America and the Weſt India iſlands; for, as the miniſter had it in contemplation to impoſe further taxes in the colonies, it was undoubtedly a primary duty to endeavour to make thoſe taxes which had been already impoſed more productive. And if this regulation was found uſeful on the Britiſh ſhores, it was thought it would be ſtill more uſeful on the American coaſt, where opportunities for ſmuggling were more abundant, by the numerous inlets with which that coaſt abounds, ſome of them unſettled, and many others but thinly inhabited; and in conſequence of the great extent of their ports, and of the very limited number of cuſtom-houſe officers who were appointed to do duty in thoſe ports.

The new plan for enforcing the laws of trade produced no murmuring or diſquiet amongſt the people of Great Britain. It was directed only againſt the illicit trader, a character as diſtinct from the Britiſh merchant as darkneſs is from light.

But in the northern colonies of America, many of their principal merchants were engaged in clandeſtine trade, and in thoſe colonies it was no diſparagement to be ſo: On the contrary, whenever a ſeizure was made, the diſpleaſure and reſentment of the people were directed againſt the officer who had done his duty, and not againſt the party who had offended againſt the law. And hence, the cuſtom-houſe officers, finding it impoſſible to live happily with their neighbours, if they exerted themſelves vigorouſly in the diſcharge of their duty, became remiſs, and ſeldom made ſeizures, except in caſes of ſuch palpable breaches of the law as came ſo openly under their own obſervation that it was impoſſible to overlook them.

The reception which this regulation met with in America was ſuch as might have been expected, from a people habituated to thoſe illicit practices in trade which it was intended to repreſs. In the northern colonies it produced univerſal alarm, diſcontent, and diſſatisfaction. As the navy officers were not ſtationary, nor their reſidence on ſhore, it was foreſeen that they would not be influenced by motives of friendſhip, fellowſhip, or neighbourhood; neither could they be over-

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overawed or intimidated from doing their duty. The merchants in thoſe colonies could, therefore, no longer depend, or, to ſpeak in mercantile language, they could no longer value themſelves, as formerly, upon the profits of their illicit traffic. But theſe cauſes of diſcontent, however aggravating and mortifying to themſelves, were not to be urged to the miniſtry and parliament; they were by no means calculated to procure that redreſs which they wiſhed, becauſe, inſtead of ſhewing the impropriety, they juſtified the expediency, of the meaſure. Their oſtenſible complaints were founded on different grounds; they complained, that the fair and the clandeſtine trader were equally expoſed to the operation of this indiſcriminating regulation, inaſmuch as the ſhips and veſſels of both were equally liable to be ſearched, and conſequently to detention upon their voyages: They alſo objected, that the officers of the navy were, of all others, the moſt improper to be appointed to ſuch a ſervice, ſince, by the former courſe and habits of their life, they could not be ſuppoſed to be acquainted with the revenue laws, and were of themſelves prone enough to fall into irregularities, without being put into ſuch a ſtation of executive authority as to render thoſe irregularities almoſt unavoidable.

It has been already obſerved that this new regulation to prevent ſmuggling extended not only to the colonies upon the continent of America, but to the Weſt India iſlands alſo; and there it produced an effect which probably was not foreſeen, otherwiſe ſome means would have been deviſed to prevent it. Between the Britiſh iſlands and the Spaniſh ſettlements in America a conſiderable clandeſtine trade had been carried on for many years, which was beneficial, not only to thoſe iſlands, but to Great Britain alſo; becauſe, through this channel, Britiſh manufactures were introduced into the Spaniſh ſettlements, and the returns were principally, though not entirely, in gold and ſilver; and if any inconveniences aroſe from this commerce,

merce, they were greatly overbalanced by the profits which were derived from it. But this trade, beneficial as it was, for want of proper inſtructions to the officers of the navy, fell a ſacrifice, for a time, to the new regulation.

The enterpriſing ſpirit of the inhabitants of the northern colonies had, notwithſtanding the remoteneſs of their ſituation, induced them to take a ſhare in this lucrative trade; and when they found themſelves cut off from it by the new regulation, their chagrin, vexation, and diſappointment roſe to a pitch ſcarcely to be deſcribed. Nevertheleſs this incidental effect of the new regulation raiſed up advocates for them in quarters where their complaints, heretofore, had been very little attended to.

The inhabitants of the middle colonies were not themſelves engaged in the Spaniſh trade to any great extent; but had an intereſt in the continuance of it *. The ſtock of grain and other proviſions, raiſed in the northern colonies, was not ſufficient for the conſumption of their inhabitants, and the deficiency was ſupplied from ſome of the ſouthern and ſome of the middle colonies. The rum and ſalted fiſh of New England were received in exchange for thoſe proviſions, but ſome part of the price was always paid in ſpecie; and by means of this coaſting trade carried on by the people of New England, the gold and ſilver which they received in their traffic with the Spaniards, or at leaſt part of it, was in time circulated through the other colonies. A very conſiderable trade was carried on from New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, to Liſbon, and the ports up the Straits, in flour, wheat, &c. The returns were moſtly made in ſpecie, half-johannes's, the remainder in port wine; and it was not until after the late peace that the court of Liſbon forbad the Americans to carry away more than a certain ſum in ſpecie on board each veſſel, the remainder of the barter to be in the produce of the country. But

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* Vide Chalmers's late publication.

another very important branch of their illicit trade was carried on through the Weſt India iſlands, who ſmuggled from the French and Spaniſh iſlands; and then the Weſt Indians bartered their ſmuggled commodities with the Americans for proviſions; for South Carolina in particular ſent great quantities of maize, or Indian corn, and live ſtock, to the Britiſh Weſt Indies. The inhabitants, therefore, of the ſouthern as well as the middle colonies, ſaw with extreme concern one of the channels through which they had been ſupplied with gold and ſilver in danger of being ſhut up, eſpecially at a time when the ſcarcity of ſpecie was felt as a general evil throughout the Britiſh part of the American continent; and they were the more ready to join in cenſuring the meaſure by which this trade was likely to be ſuppreſſed, as they thought it apparent that the continuance of the trade would not only be beneficial to the colonies, but alſo to the mother-country.

And thus it happened, that this new regulation was the cauſe of more or leſs uneaſineſs throughout the Britiſh colonies, whether on the continent of America, or in the Weſt Indies; and certain it is, that it excited much more ill-humour amongſt the people of the northern colonies than any other meaſure of the Britiſh miniſtry or legiſlature ever had produced. When their trade with the foreign iſlands had been burthened by the impoſition of duties, it is true, a ferment aroſe; but, after the firſt ebullition of reſentment had ſubſided, they conſidered the operation of the act of parliament as unavoidable, and quietly ſubmitted; hoping, perhaps, to elude its effect by clandeſtine importation. But theſe hopes were now either cut off, or rendered precarious, by the new regulation; and as it operated by intervals, every ſeizure was a freſh cauſe of diſcontent, and not only kept alive, but added to the general maſs of ill-humour. Their newſpapers were, for ſeveral ſucceſſive years, filled with complaints of the detention and ſeizure of their veſſels, and with abuſive, contemptuous, and provoking paragraphs againſt the officers of the navy: And theſe vehicles of clamour being circulated through the continent, excited not only a ſpirit of hatred and reſentment againſt thoſe officers, but of oppoſition to the ordinances of the mother-country amongſt the people of the colonies in general, which made a ſtrong impreſſion upon their minds and prepared them for adopting more eaſily thoſe violent meaſures which a few years afterwards ended in open revolt.

1764. The miniſter, in purſuance of the plan which he had laid down for obliging the inhabitants of the colonies to bear a ſhare in the expence which might be neceſſary for their future protection, introduced a bill into the houſe of commons for impoſing duties on certain kinds of merchandize, when imported into the colonies, requiring the payment of thoſe duties to be made in gold and ſilver, and containing the uſual clauſe in the revenue bills for ordering them, when collected, to be paid into the exchequer, where they were to be ſet apart as a ſeparate fund, together with the future produce of all the former parliamentary duties and taxes which had been heretofore collected in America; and this fund was to be applied, under the diſpoſition of parliament, for defraying the future charges of protecting, defending, and ſecuring the colonies. The bill having paſſed through both houſes, received the royal aſſent on the 5th of April in this year.

The miniſter, by procuring the act to be paſſed, had a two-fold object in view; the firſt, to regulate the commerce of the colonies; and the ſecond, to raiſe a revenue. So far as duties were impoſed by it on the importation of foreign ſugars, indigo and coffee, Eaſt India wroug htſilks and calicoes, foreign cambricks and French lawns, the intention ſeems to have been to diſcourage the uſe and conſumption of thoſe articles, and thereby to encourage and promote the uſe and

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conſumption of Britiſh manufactures, and of Britiſh Weſt India produce of the like kinds; but if, notwithſtanding the impoſition of the duties, thoſe articles of foreign manufacture and produce ſhould ſtill continue to be imported into America, then the act produced its ſecondary effect of raiſing a revenue. The other duties impoſed by this act; thoſe, namely, on Madeira wine, on port and Spaniſh wines, and on coffee and pimento of the growth of the Britiſh Weſt India iſlands, were for the ſole purpoſe of raiſing a revenue; and in fixing the rates and proportions of theſe, the miniſter ſeems to have been abundantly cautious of avoiding any juſt imputation of dealing hardly by the colonies. On the contrary, it would appear that he wiſhed to impreſs them moſt ſtrongly with the idea, that although they were now to be called upon to bear ſome part of the burthens of the ſtate, ſtill their proportion ſhould be far, very far, below what was borne by the inhabitants of the mother-country. Thus the duty impoſed by this act on Britiſh coffee imported into the colonies was only ſeven ſhillings per cwt. or three farthings per pound; whereas the people of Great Britain paid an inland exciſe duty of one ſhilling and ſix-pence upon every pound of coffee which they conſumed, beſides a farther duty payable at the cuſtom-houſe on importation.

In the ſame ſeſſion of parliament an act was paſſed reſpecting the paper currency of the colonies, the grounds and motives for the enacting of which it is neceſſary here to explain. During the late war, the colonial aſſemblies had been in the practice of iſſuing bills of credit to anſwer their preſent exigencies; and that theſe bills might more effectually ſupply the place of money, they were made a legal tender in the payment of all debts, as if they had been gold or ſilver, and were made redeemable after a certain time, either by the collection of taxes impoſed by the aſſemblies for their redemption, or by the money allotted to the reſpective colonies, by the votes of parliament, as a compenſation for their ſervices. The emiſſion of ſo much paper money, iſſued perhaps in ſome of the colonies with more profuſion than was abſolutely neceſſary, produced one effect very injurious to the colonies, by raiſing the courſe of exchange between them and the mother-country; ſo that in ſome of them bills of exchange on Great Britain could not be procured but at a loſs to the purchaſer of between thirty and forty per cent.; and as Britiſh money, and indeed every kind of coin which was current in the colonies, paſſed only at certain rates fixed by law, whatever the courſe of exchange might be; it happened, that when the courſe of exchange roſe above thoſe rates, not only the Britiſh money, but all the other current coin in the colonies, was either withheld by individuals from circulation, or remitted to the mother-country in lieu of bills of exchange; and thus in the courſe of a few years the ſcarcity of ſpecie was felt as a general evil in all the colonies. This ſcarcity of ſpecie was alſo very injurious to the Britiſh merchants; becauſe it happened not unfrequently that the paper bills of credit, which their agents in the colonies were obliged to receive in payment of their debts, for want of another medium of commerce, were depreciated in value by the riſe of exchange, even whilſt they remained in their poſſeſſion, and before they could lay them out in the purchaſe of bills of exchange, or any other commodity which would ſerve as a remittance to Great Britain. This evil was more or leſs felt in all the colonies, but more eſpecially in Virginia, where, from the miſconduct of the treaſurer, the bills of credit received by him from the collectors of the taxes were lent out by him to individuals for his own benefit, and thrown back into circulation, inſtead of being locked up and ſecured until they were burnt by order of the aſſembly. A repreſentation on this ſubject had been made to the

Britiſh miniſter by the merchants trading to Virginia, in which the evils ariſing from a ſuperabundance of paper money had been more ſeverely felt than in any of the other colonies. But as the evil was more or leſs felt in all the colonies, it was neceſſary that the remedy to be provided ſhould be as extenſive; and thus the act of parliament above mentioned was paſſed, whereby the colonial aſſemblies were reſtrained from making their bills of credit a lawful tender in payment of money.

The act for impoſing duties on merchandize was only a part of the plan which the miniſter had in contemplation. At the time when the reſolutions upon which this act was founded were moved in the houſe of commons, he alſo moved another, of the following import: "That towards further defraying the expences of protecting and "ſecuring the colonies, it may be proper to charge certain ſtamp "duties in the colonies." But he did not think fit during this ſeſſion to introduce any bill for carrying this laſt reſolution into effect; leaving it thus open, that if the inhabitants of the colonies ſhould diſlike ſuch a mode of levying money upon them, they might have an opportunity of ſuggeſting ſome other which would be more agreeable; and undoubtedly this manner of proceeding was not only a proof of the miniſter's candour, but of his inclination to accommodate himſelf to the wiſhes and deſires of the colonies, as far as the neceſſities of the ſtate would permit. The reſolution which was moved, was a notice to the colonial aſſemblies that the Britiſh treaſury ſtood in need of a ſupply; and it alſo pointed out to them the manner in which this ſupply was propoſed to be raiſed; but as the miniſter declined bringing in a bill to carry the reſolution into effect until the next ſeſſion of parliament, it was an evidence that he did not chuſe to take the colonies by ſurpriſe, or to levy money upon them in a mode to which they had not yet been accuſtomed, without giving them previous and timely notice.

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But however tenderly the miniſter had dealt with the colonies in the duties already impoſed, and whatever appearance of accommodation he aſſumed in the impoſition of thoſe which he diſplayed in paſſing the previous reſolution concerning ſtamp duties, without following it up the ſame ſeſſion of parliament with a bill he meditated; his general policy with reſpect to America, which in conſequence of the regulation of laſt year had produced ſevere ſtrictures in ſome and given umbrage in all the colonies, was nevertheleſs become the theme of general clamour.

The inhabitants of New England, rendered uneaſy by the regulation of the laſt year, and ſtill ſmarting under its effects, were not in a fit temper of mind to ſubmit quietly to any further impoſitions on their commerce; and the leſs ſo, becauſe they ſaw that in conſequence of the vigilance and activity of the officers of the navy in the exerciſe of their new authority, ſuch impoſitions would in future be more productive, and leſs eaſily evaded, than in times paſt. They thought too, that they ſaw in the miniſter's proceedings the appearance of a ſettled plan gradually unfolding itſelf, but not yet fully diſcloſed, which in detail and in extent might even go beyond their preſent apprehenſions: And, inſtead of waiting to combat particular parts of this plan, as they ſhould appear, they boldly reſolved to controvert at once the general principle upon which the whole was founded, by queſtioning the right and authority of parliament to levy duties or taxes upon the colonies in any form or ſhape whatever; and by maintaining that the exerciſe of ſuch an authority by parliament was an infraction, not only of the privileges of the coloniſts as Britiſh ſubjects, but of their rights as men. Such was the import of a reſolution entered upon the journals of the lower houſe of aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, in the fall of the year 1764, and of a letter to Mr. Mauduit, their agent in England*; from which it appears that they founded their pretenſions of being free from taxation by the Britiſh parliament upon the broadeſt baſis that they could aſſume—their rights as men; a baſis which, if admitted as a ground of argument againſt parliamentary authority, placed them at once not in the condition of colonies, or of ſubordinate dominions, but of independent ſtates, unconnected with the mother-country by political compacts, and owing her no other obligations than thoſe which nature impoſed. Hence alſo it is manifeſt, that the republican principles which diſtinguiſhed the earlieſt ſettlers of Maſſachuſets Bay were not forgotten, but were ſtill recognized and ſtill acted upon by their poſterity, after the lapſe of near a century and a half.

By another reſolution of the ſame aſſembly, a new complaint was added to the liſt of their other grievances, "The late extenſion of "the powers of the court of admiralty," on pretence that the right of trial by jury was violated. It is not certainly known upon what late proceeding of the mother-country this complaint was grounded. If it was upon the regulation of the preceding year, it was altogether unfounded, for that regulation did not enlarge the powers of the admiralty courts, it only extended the power of ſeizing veſſels for breaches of the laws of trade to a greater number of perſons than thoſe who poſſeſſed it before. It is true, that in conſequence of this regulation, a veſſel ſeized upon the coaſt of New England might be carried into one of the other colonies, and might there be tried; but this effect reſulted not from the regulation, but from the general powers incident to courts of admiralty, and ſo ancient as to be coëval with their original inſtitution. Whatever is

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Report of the Committee of the Houſe of Lords, in 1774.

done upon the ſea is ſubject to their juriſdiction, and they are not confined in their cognizance to things which happen within any particular diſtrict or portion of the ſea, but their juriſdiction is as unlimited as the ſea itſelf.

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But if the complaint was founded on the clauſes in the act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, directing the penalties thereby inflicted on breaches of the laws of trade, to be recoverable in the courts of vice-admiralty in America, this was no new ſubject of complaint; for ſimilar clauſes had been inſerted in former acts of parliament reſpecting the trade of the colonies, ſome of them made ſo long ago as the reign of William the Third *.

It appears, too, to have been the determination of the members who compoſed this aſſembly, that the other colonies ſhould be invited to unite with that of Maſſachuſets Bay, in a joint oppoſition to the exerciſe of the parliamentary authority condemned by their above-mentioned reſolution †; but for the preſent they prudently delayed ſuch an invitation, until, by diſſeminating their republican notions of government, and diſperſing through the continent their political pamphlets on the rights of the colonies and the encroachments of the mother-country, they ſhould in ſome meaſure prepare the minds of the inhabitants of the other colonies for acceding to ſuch a propoſal; and, in the mean time, in behalf of themſelves and their own conſtituents, they reſolved to ſet forth their complaints in a petition to the king and parliament.

It has been already noticed, that, in the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, an act was paſſed for reſtraining the paper currency of the colonies. This act, too, had the misfortune to give offence; and it was more offenſive in the ſouthern than in the northern colonies: Nevertheleſs its beneficial conſequences were very ſoon experienced; for within

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* 7 and 8 W. 3. c. 22. 3 Geo. 2. c. 28. 6 Geo. 2. c. 13.

† See the Report of the Committee of the Houſe of Lords, in 1774.

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two years after it had paſſed, the courſe of exchange between Great Britain and the colonies, which had been ſo injurious to the latter, was reduced to its proper level.

What proportion of paper currency ſhould be admitted in the general circulation of a country, to ſupply the place of gold and ſilver, is a ſubject of ſo complicated a nature, that the moſt enlightened men have differed in their opinions about it, even in countries where experience could be brought in aid of their inveſtigations. It cannot therefore be a matter of great ſurpriſe, that the American politicians of the ſouthern colonies* ſhould have been miſtaken in their opinions about the effect of this act. The want of a ſufficient quantity of ſpecie to fulfil the purpoſes of circulation was obvious to all; and they thought that an act which had a tendency to hurt the credit of the medium which ſupplied the place of gold and ſilver, muſt neceſſarily be injurious. They looked upon themſelves as the moſt competent judges of their own neceſſities, and conſidered the interference of the Britiſh parliament, in paſſing this act, as an unneceſſary and wanton exertion of power, the ultimate utility of which they more than doubted, whilſt they deprecated its preſent effects as ruinous and deſtructive.

The ſouthern provinces, being but very little engaged in trade, would not, perhaps, have thought themſelves ſo much affected by the act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament for impoſing duties, had it not been for the clauſe which required the payment of thoſe duties to be made in ſpecie, and this money to be paid into the exchequer in England, before it was to be applied towards the expence of protecting and defending the colonies; and even with this clauſe, had not the act been alſo accompanied with the other, reſpecting the paper currency, it is poſſible that the northern and middle colonies

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* In New England they had ſome experience on this ſubject, having before felt the benefit of a ſimilar act.

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might have been ſuffered to murmur by themſelves, as on former occaſions. But the act for reſtraining their paper currency affected all the colonies in ſome degree; and, in conſequence of a greater ſcarcity of ſpecie, it affected the ſouthern colonies more than any one of the reſt: And when different communities, however diſunited in other reſpects, conſider themſelves as ſuffering under the ſame common grievance, mutual ſympathy ariſes, which, by a natural movement, gradually extends itſelf beyond the cauſe by which it was originally excited, and, in time, involves as well their ſeparate as their common cauſes of complaint. At this juncture, too, it ſo happened, that thoſe meaſures of the Britiſh adminiſtration which had given the greateſt offence to the northern and middle colonies had ſome relation to that by which the ſouthern colonies thought themſelves principally aggrieved. The regulation againſt ſmuggling had put an end to the trade carried on with the Spaniſh ſettlements, and in conſequence deprived the inhabitants of the colonies of the means of obtaining further ſupplies of ſpecie; whilſt the act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament for impoſing duties in America, which required theſe duties to be paid in ſpecie, and to be remitted to England, would, it was thought, in a ſhort time, drain the colonies of the little of the precious metals which they now poſſeſſed; and, as the climax of their misfortunes, the act which related to their paper currency, had a tendency to deſtroy the only medium of commerce which remained.

By this ſtrange accidental connection between theſe three different regulations, the complaints of the New England provinces, which were principally directed againſt the two firſt of them, were heard with more attention, were better received, and made a deeper impreſſion in the ſouthern colonies than had been uſual. The people of New England were not wanting, on their part, to improve the favourable moment, for the purpoſe of laying the foundation of

Introduction. 1764. a general oppoſition. The preſs was reſorted to. The grievances of the colonies were painted in the moſt impreſſive language; and the Britiſh miniſtry were boldly charged with harbouring deſigns againſt the liberty, property, and future proſperity of the colonies: And thus a general murmur of diſcontent began to run through the whole extent of the Britiſh ſettlements on the continent of America, which was not a little increaſed by the reſolution of the houſe of commons, which manifeſted an intention in that houſe, at ſome future period, to impoſe ſtamp duties in the colonies.

There were, in all the colonial aſſemblies, as indeed there are in all public aſſemblies, certain popular characters to whom the great body of the people looked up for advice and information in matters of difficulty. Theſe leading men, even in the colonies which were the moſt ſincerely attached to the mother-country, entertained, about this time, ſtrong ſuſpicions and apprehenſions of the arbitrary deſigns of the Britiſh court. Such ſuſpicions originating perhaps, at firſt, in the violence and animoſity of party, with which the beginning of the preſent reign was ſo much diſtracted, had, a little before this time, been very generally diffuſed through Great Britain itſelf, and were from thence probably tranſplanted into America. And unfortunately for the ſucceſs of Mr. Grenville's American meaſures, perhaps unhappily for the general intereſt of the Britiſh empire, and, without doubt, unfortunately for the internal peace and tranquillity both of Great Britain and America, ſuch ſuſpicions were countenanced by one of the greateſt men[*] of that, or perhaps any other period, whoſe recent ſervices, and the unparalleled ſucceſs of whoſe meaſures, whilſt he conducted the affairs of the nation, ſtamped an irreſiſtible authority upon whatever opinion he thought fit to eſpouſe. If thoſe ſuſpicions, however originating, were countenanced* by this great man, the American patriots, placed at ſuch a diſtance, and deſtitute of equal means of information, may be eaſily excuſed for adopting them: But certain it is, that they prevailed very much about this time amongſt the leading men in all the colonies, and were, through them, inſtilled into the minds of the people at large. And from thence it happened, that every act of the Britiſh government reſpecting America was viewed with more than common jealouſy. Introduction. 1764.

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[*] Mr. Pitt.

1765. Such was the ſtate of public opinion and ſentiment in the North American colonies towards the end of the year 1764, and the beginning of the year 1765. But, notwithſtanding the threatening ſymptoms of diſcontent, uneaſineſs, and jealouſy, which had begun to appear, the miniſter was not deterred from proſecuting the deſign which he had ſo long meditated, of raiſing a revenue in the colonies by means of ſtamp duties. Having previouſly inquired of the agents for the colonies, whether they had any inſtructions from their conſtituents to propoſe any other method of raiſing money in the colonies than that of which he had given intimation the preceding year; or whether they had authority to offer a compenſation for the revenue which was propoſed to be raiſed; and receiving for anſwer, that they had no authority for either of theſe purpoſes; he now reſolved to lay his plan before the houſe of commons, and, on the 29th of January, in a committee of that houſe, moved fifty-five reſolutions for impoſing ſtamp duties on certain papers and documents uſed in the colonies. Theſe reſolutions having been agreed to, a bill grounded upon them was ſoon afterwards introduced, which, although it met with vehement oppoſition, particularly from that party which has ſince diſtinguiſhed itſelf by the name of the Whig party, and at the head of which was the marquis of Rockingham,

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* Mr. Pitt's ſpeech on the repeal of the ſtamp act.

Introduction. 1765. ingham, was nevertheleſs carried through both houſes of parliament by a conſiderable majority, and received the royal aſſent on the 22d of March.

By this act, which was to take effect in America on the 1ſt of November following, ſtamp duties were impoſed on ſuch papers and documents as are uſed as evidence in the common dealings and tranſactions of life between man and man; or on ſuch as are uſed in legal proceedings, in appointments to offices, in admiſſions to profeſſions, and in the entry and clearance of veſſels at the cuſtom-houſe; and had the authority of parliament to paſs it been free from all objection, it muſt be confeſſed that the ſcheme of taxation propoſed by this act, was perhaps one of the beſt which could have been deviſed for raiſing a revenue from a people ſpred over ſuch an extent of the continent, and parcelled out into ſo many different governments, inaſmuch as it was not only ſimple and practicable, but equitable in its operation, equally well adapted to all the colonies, and, in its nature, efficacious. It excluded all jealouſy and envy, becauſe it extended to all the colonies, and was to be raiſed on papers and documents which were common to them all. It muſt be efficacious, becauſe theſe papers and documents were declared to be invalid, unleſs they were ſtamped; and the ſtamps could not be obtained without the payment of the duty. And it was alſo equitable, as the weight of it would fall chiefly upon thoſe claſſes of people who were beſt able to bear it; and as it would be moſt productive in thoſe colonies which were the moſt flouriſhing, and in which the tranſactions between man and man were the moſt frequent.

The reſolutions on which the bill was founded, together with the debates which it had produced in its paſſage through the houſe of commons, were, without loſs of time, tranſmitted to America by the agents for the colonies; ſo that the leading men in that quarter of the world had full time to deliberate on the conſequences of the act, with all its attendant circumſtances, before it took effect, and to prepare the minds of the great body of the people for yielding to thoſe impreſſions which they wiſhed them to receive. Prepoſſeſſed as they were with ſuſpicions of the arbitrary deſigns of the Britiſh court, they now thought that thoſe ſuſpicions were converted into certainties; and that America, thus taxed without her conſent, was deſtined to be the firſt victim to arbitrary power; and they reſolved not to ſubmit to ſuch a melancholy fate without the moſt ſtrenuous reſiſtance. A gleam of hope aroſe from ſeeing the powerful oppoſition which had been made to the act in its paſſage through the houſe of commons. They were thereby encouraged to purſue the line of conduct marked out by their preſent feelings; and they determined to exert themſelves with vigour in ſtirring up ſuch a ferment as might diſtreſs, if not overturn, the adminiſtration, who were the authors of this meaſure, and as would certainly defeat the effect of the act for a time, and perhaps eventually produce its repeal: And this reſolution ſeems to have been adopted by the leading men in all the colonies, without any apparent concert except what aroſe from a general knowledge of one another's ſentiments, in conſequence of the tranſactions of the preceding year.

With this view the arguments which had been uſed by the members of oppoſition in the Britiſh parliament were retraced, enforced, and enlarged; and in this form publiſhed in pamphlets or circulated in newſpapers. Theſe publications were adapted to all capacities. It was contended with great ſtrength and force of reaſoning, that as the inhabitants of the colonies were Britiſh ſubjects as much as the inhabitants of Great Britain, ſo were they entitled to the ſame conſtitutional rights and privileges: That it was the birthright of every Britiſh ſubject to give and grant his own money for the ſupport of government, and not to be taxed but by his own conſent or that of his repreſentative: And as the people of the colonies were not repreſented in the Britiſh parliament, ſo the Britiſh parliament could not conſtitutionally impoſe taxes upon them. And to ſuch arguments other topics were added, not perhaps more convincing, but better calculated to draw the attention, and impreſs the feelings of the American coloniſt. The act was repreſented to be oppreſſive in its operation, by converting the plainneſs and ſimplicity of their former proceedings, whether legal or commercial, into labyrinths of doubt, difficulty, and perplexity. It was ſaid that the act was peculiarly inapplicable to a country ſo extenſively ſettled, and ſo thinly inhabited, as America; for it might, and frequently would happen (to give one example inſtead of many), that the planter or farmer, upon ſo common a tranſaction as the purchaſe of a horſe, might be obliged to ride many miles to procure a piece of ſtamped paper, on which he could write a bill of ſale, and even when he had performed his journey, he might be in doubt what kind of ſtamp was proper for his purpoſe. In this manner the ſuppoſed evils and inconveniences attending its operation were magnified and heightened in language ſuited to the apprehenſions of the maſs of the people; a deſign in the Britiſh miniſtry to enſlave America was ſuppoſed to be diſcovered; and the ſtamp act, it was pretended, was only to be regarded as the forerunner of innumerable other oppreſſions which were to follow. And thus the people were taught to conſider the period when the act was to take effect as the commencement of their ſlavery, unleſs they manfully reſiſted its execution.

Independent of all the previous means which were uſed to bring about an oppoſition, it was rather to be expected, that an act which impoſed new burdens, and at the ſame time rendered the tranſactions between man and man in the common affairs of life ſomewhat leſs plain and eaſy, and, above all, which was ſo open and liable to objection on conſtitutional grounds, would not be well received amongſt ſome of the colonies at leaſt, nor acquieſced in without reluctance; but it excited no ſmall ſhare of ſurpriſe when it was known that the firſt legiſlative oppoſition which it met with, took place in the ancient colony of Virginia, famed beyond all the reſt for loyalty to the ſovereign, and attachment to the mother-country.

Thoſe to whom this event was the cauſe of ſurpriſe, did not reflect, that during the preceding war the importance of the colonies in the general ſcale of the Britiſh empire had been blazoned forth and magnified in various debates in both houſes of parliament, as if the exiſtence of Great Britain as a commercial nation had depended upon her trade with the colonies; that it had been made a favourite theme of declamation with miniſters whenever they preſſed for ſupplies to ſupport the war; and that the colonies would at leaſt eſtimate their conſequence equal to what it had been repreſented. Neither did they reflect, that heretofore the colonies had been kept in fear by the vicinity of the French and Spaniards, whilſt the former were in poſſeſſion of Canada, and the latter of the two Floridas; but that now, ſince the ceſſion of theſe provinces to Great Britain, they were relieved from all future apprehenſions on account of ſuch formidable neighbours, and ſaw themſelves placed in a ſtate of ſecurity which they had never before experienced. Neither did they reflect, that in proportion as the protection of Great Britain had become leſs neceſſary, ſo it would be leſs valued; and that the treaty of Paris, which gave ſecurity to the colonies, did, at the ſame time, weaken their dependence on the mother-country.

And this proceeding in the legiſlature of Virginia will ſtill leſs be the cauſe of ſurpriſe, if to theſe conſiderations we add, that ſoon after the commencement of the preſent reign, a bold and daring

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ſpirit of oppoſition to government had broken forth and ſpred itſelf amongſt the people of England; and that it muſt neceſſarily happen that ſome portion of this predominant ſpirit would be imparted to the inhabitants of the colonies in the proſecution of that cloſe and conſtant intercourſe which ſubſiſted between them and the mother-country. Indeed ſuch had been the violence of faction in England, and ſo bold and daring its partiſans, that even the ſplendour of the crown could not ſhield the head which it adorned againſt the invenomed ſhafts of ſlander: And ſuch was the perverſeneſs of the people, that puniſhments inflicted by the courts of juſtice for the moſt heinous offences againſt government were in ſome inſtances converted into public rewards *.

That the colony of Virginia ſet the example in this oppoſition to the ſtamp act, was perhaps, after all, chiefly owing to accident. It happened that the general aſſembly of that province was ſitting at the time when a copy of the act arrived in that country, together with certain intelligence that it had paſſed through both houſes of parliament and received the royal aſſent. The act, it is true, was not to have any effect till the month of November, but they knew not whether they would have another opportunity of deliberating upon it as an aſſembly, until after that event had taken place. The leading men too were anxious to ſhew to their conſtituents, that in their legiſlative capacity they were not backward in avowing thoſe ſentiments which, as individuals, they had taken ſome trouble to promulgate. The people had been already prepared by reiterated publications in the newſpapers, and it remained only for the aſſembly,

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* The author of the North Briton, and of the Eſſay on Woman, is a living example of the truth of this remark. In a valuable appointment beſtowed upon him by the corporation of London, he quietly enjoys the fruits of thoſe ſlanders which filled his ſovereign's breaſt with anguiſh, whilſt every good man muſt execrate ſo nefarious a publication, and ſo diabolical an author.

by ſome expreſſion of their will, to give a ſanction to the intended oppoſition. Indeed, without this ſanction, the reſiſtance which they meditated would have been incomplete. The conſent of the governor and council was not to be expected; whatever therefore could be done muſt be the act of the lower houſe of aſſembly only; and the ſubject was there introduced without loſs of time, and gave occaſion to one of the moſt violent and intemperate debates which had ever been known in that country. Some idea may be formed of the manner in which this debate was conducted, by the following paſſage, extracted from a ſpeech of one* of the members, who afterwards made a conſpicuous figure in the beginning of the rebellion. After declaiming with bitterneſs againſt the ſuppoſed arbitrary meaſures of the preſent reign, he added, "Cæſar had his "Brutus, Charles the Firſt an Oliver Cromwell, and George the "Third—" But before he could proceed farther, a cry of, Treaſon! was heard from one quarter of the houſe, and the ſpeaker ſoon afterwards riſing up, called him to order, and declared that he would quit the chair, unleſs he was ſupported by the houſe in reſtraining ſuch intemperate ſpeeches.

This debate was concluded by propoſing four reſolutions of the following effect, which were agreed to by the houſe, and entered upon their journals on the 29th day of May. The firſt declared, that their anceſtors brought with them from England, and tranſmitted to their poſterity, all the rights, privileges, and immunities, enjoyed by Britiſh ſubjects: The ſecond, that theſe were confirmed and declared by two royal charters, granted by king James the Firſt: The third, that they have ever ſince enjoyed the right of being governed by their own aſſembly in the articles of

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* Mr. Patrick Henry.

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taxes * and internal police; which right has not been forfeited or yielded up, but has been recognized by the king and people of Great Britain: And the fourth, that the general aſſembly of Virginia, with his majeſty or his ſubſtitute, have, in their repreſentative capacity, the only excluſive right and power to lay taxes and impoſitions upon the inhabitants of that colony: And that every attempt to inveſt ſuch a power in any perſon or perſons whatſoever, other than the general aſſembly aforeſaid, is illegal, unconſtitutional, and unjuſt, and has a manifeſt tendency to deſtroy Britiſh as well as American freedom.

Two other reſolutions were offered by the committee to whom this matter was referred, which were rejected by the houſe: But as they ſerve to characterize the kind of ſpirit which had begun to gain ground, and which poſſeſſed ſome of the members of that aſſembly, the ſubſtance of them is here inſerted. The firſt amounted to a declaration that the inhabitants of Virginia are not bound to yield obedience to any law impoſing taxes upon them, other than the laws of the general aſſembly; and the ſecond denounced thoſe to be enemies to the colony who ſhould maintain, by ſpeaking or writing, that any perſon or perſons, other than the general aſſembly, had a right to impoſe taxes upon them.

But however intemperate the debate had been, which preceded theſe reſolutions, and whatever heat and violence were diſcoverable in individual members of this aſſembly, there was nevertheleſs a manifeſt and ſtriking difference between the roſolutions of the Maſſachuſets aſſembly of the preceding year, and thoſe which were

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* That theſe reſolutions may be fully underſtood, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that in Virginia, and indeed in all the *colonies* of North America, a diſtinction was made between taxes, and duties on the importation or exportation of merchandize; ſo that the former of theſe terms was not ſuppoſed to comprehend the latter.

now paſſed by the lower houſe of aſſembly in Virginia; a difference deſcriptive both of the particular views and of the general political character which diſtinguiſhed the inhabitants of theſe reſpective colonies. The former, as if they had been already independent, reſort at once to their rights as men—as a ground to exempt them from taxation by the Britiſh parliament: The latter, venerating the Britiſh conſtitution, ſenſible of its benefits, and happy in their connexion with the mother-country, found their claims wholly upon their rights as Britiſh ſubjects, which had been declared and confirmed by their charters. The former claim an unlimited exemption from duties as well as taxes, thereby undermining the whole fabric of the colonial ſyſtem: The latter, avowing the relation in which they ſtand to the mother-country, confine their claim of legiſlative juriſdiction to taxes and internal police, thereby tacitly conceding to the Britiſh parliament the impoſition of duties on merchandize, and the ordering and regulation of their commerce.

The aſſembly of Virginia having entered into theſe reſolutions, was diſſolved as ſoon as the governor was made acquainted with them. But it was now too late to ſtop the progreſs of the flame which had burſt forth: Indeed the miſchief was already done, becauſe the reſolves of the aſſembly were ſuppoſed to ſanction whatever irregularities might enſue, in oppoſing the execution of an act which, by theſe reſolves, was pronounced to be illegal, unconſtitutional, and unjuſt; and the conflagration, which had been kindled was now deſtined to ſpread through the colony at large, by the return of the members to their reſpective counties.

The aſſemblies of the other colonies, in the courſe of the year, entered into reſolutions, ſimilar to thoſe of the aſſembly of Virginia; and whatever differences there might be between them in other reſpects, there was but one opinion on the ſubject of the ſtamp act.

They all concurred in voting it to be an act that was unconſtitutional, and an infringement of their rights.

We have ſeen that the aſſemby of Maſſachuſets Bay had in the preceding year entered into reſolutions, and tranſmitted a petition to the king and parliament, complaining of a variety of grievances, and amongſt the reſt, of the reſolution of parliament which announced an intention to impoſe ſtamp duties in the colonies. The ſame aſſembly now brought forward another meaſure of much more importance in its nature and conſequences, as it was the firſt leading ſtep towards that confederation amongſt the colonies which ultimately ſeparated them from the mother-country. It was no part of the character of the people of New England to be remiſs in any thing which concerned their intereſt. They had not been inattentive obſervers of the diſcontent which prevailed in the other colonies on account of the ſtamp act, and they ſeized upon the preſent as the critical moment for reconciling the intereſts, conſolidating the grievances, and uniting the complaints, of all the colonies; a deſign which we have ſeen they had in contemplation the preceding year.

In proſecution of this intention the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, on the ſixth day of June, entered into a reſolution, ſetting forth the expedience of holding a general congreſs, which ſhould conſiſt of deputies from all the lower houſes of aſſembly on the American continent, to conſult together, and take into conſideration the common grievances under which the colonies laboured, in conſequence of the late acts of parliament for impoſing duties and taxes, and to frame and prepare a general petition and addreſs to the king and parliament, in behalf of all the colonies, ſetting forth theſe grievances and praying for redreſs. They alſo reſolved, that letters ſigned by their ſpeaker, by order of the houſe, ſhould be ſent to the aſſemblies of the other colonies, communicating this reſolution, and requeſting ſuch other aſſemblies, if they approved of the propoſal, to appoint deputies to meet with thoſe which ſhould be appointed by the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, in a general congreſs to be held at New York, on the firſt day of October following; and they afterwards proceeded to nominate their own deputies, and to vote the ſum of four hundred and fifty pounds for defraying their expences. In conſequence of theſe reſolutions letters were prepared and tranſmitted; and ſuch of the other colonial aſſemblies as were permitted to meet before the month of October, very readily acceded to the meaſure recommended by the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, and nominated deputies for the propoſed congreſs. Although the leading men in ſome of the colonies had not the moſt favourable opinion, either of the candour, ſincerity, and plain dealing of the people of New England, or of the general courſe and tendency of their politics; yet, ſuch is the effect of a common grievance in reconciling differences of opinion and allaying jealouſies, that this proceeding of the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, which certainly had ſome appearance of dictating to the reſt of the colonies, nevertheleſs met with general approbation.

Whilſt ſuch meaſures were purſued in America, an event took place in England which, more than all their own efforts, ſerved the cauſe of the coloniſts, and promoted the ſucceſs of their deſigns. This was a change of the miniſtry. On the 10th of July, Mr. Grenville and his adherents were diſmiſſed from their offices, to give place to the whig party, under the marquis of Rockingham, a party which we have ſeen had exerted themſelves ſtrenuouſly in oppoſing the ſtamp act. The vehement declamations of this party againſt the miniſter within the houſe of parliament, and the active exertions of their friends and partiſans amongſt the people without; the threats of the Americans to diſcontinue the uſe of Britiſh manufactures until the ſtamp act ſhould be repealed, and the conſequent alarm ſpread amongſt the merchants, manufacturers, and ſhip owners; the murmurs and diſcontents of the lower orders of the people, from the ſcarcity of bread and the high price of proviſions, calamities to which they were expoſed during the whole of this year; all theſe cauſes combined had excited ſuch a clamour in the nation as greatly weakened and diſtreſſed the late adminiſtration, and probably conduced to their removal. But the immediate cauſe of their diſmiſſion is ſaid to have been an affront given to the princeſs dowager of Wales, and through her to the king, by neglecting to inſert her name in a bill introduced by the miniſtry into the houſe of lords, towards the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, for appointing a regency in caſe of the death of the king, during the minority of the prince of Wales; an omiſſion which was rectified after the bill was ſent to the houſe of commons. But, whatever was the cauſe, the change which enſued, by placing the whig party in power, gave to the inhabitants of the colonies a well-grounded hope, that the act for impoſing ſtamp duties would be repealed in the next ſeſſion of parliament.

In America, however threatening the appearances had been, no actual diſturbances took place until the month of Auguſt; but in that month, about the time when intelligence arrived of the change of the miniſtry, the ſpirit which had been ſo long tumultuouſly gathering, broke forth into open violence, firſt at Boſton in Maſſachuſets Bay, and afterwards in ſeveral of the other colonies. At Boſton, the fury of the populace was directed againſt the chief-juſtice of the province, who was ſuppoſed to favour the miniſterial plan for taxing the colonies; againſt the officer appointed to diſtribute the ſtamps, the comptroller of the cuſtoms, and the regiſter of the court of admiralty. Previous intelligence of what was in agitation having been conveyed to them by their friends, they were fortunate enough to be able to ſave their perſons from inſult, but their houſes were pillaged, their furniture was burnt or deſtroyed, and the records of the admiralty, not leſs odious in that province than the ſtamp act itſelf, were committed to the flames. The council of the province were aſſembled by the governor, but they ſhewed no inclination to be active in ſuppreſſing the riots. The governor attempted to muſter ſome companies of militia to aſſiſt the civil magiſtrate in the preſervation of the peace, but they refuſed to obey his orders; and the ſtamp officer, ſeeing no proſpect of protection, ſoon afterwards reſigned his office.

In the other colonies the tumults were not ſo violent and outrageous as thoſe at Boſton; but in all of them they were ſufficiently alarming to frighten the perſons who were appointed to diſtribute the ſtamps into a reſignation of their offices.

A conſiderable interval having been required for preparing the ſtamped papers in England, none of them had yet arrived in America; and the officers to whom they were to have been delivered, having been obliged to reſign their appointments, the general care of theſe papers, upon their arrival in the months of September and October, devolved upon the governors of the reſpective provinces. In ſome of the colonies the ſtamped papers were ſeized and deſtroyed by the populace; in moſt of them, through the prudent management of the governors, they were lodged in places of ſecurity on ſhore, or put on board the ſhips of war; but in none of the thirteen colonies, after ſuch riots, was any one found hardy enough to undertake the diſtribution of them.

In the month of October deputies from nine out of the thirteen colonies met at New York, to hold a general congreſs. The four colonies not repreſented in this congreſs were, New Hampſhire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. From the three laſt of theſe deputies were not ſent, becauſe the letters from Maſſachuſets Bay arrived during the receſs of their aſſemblies, which were not afterwards permitted to meet till the firſt of October had paſſed. And in New Hampſhire, the aſſembly did not think fit to appoint deputies, although they approved of the holding of a general congreſs, and ſignified an inclination to join in any petition that ſhould be agreed upon by the deputies of the other colonies.

The firſt ſeſſion of theſe deputies was held on the ſeventh day of October; and twelve days having been ſpent in debates and deliberations, on the nineteenth they entered into thirteen reſolutions, comprehending a declaration as well of the rights as of the grievances of all the colonies. In theſe reſolutions they ſet forth, that the inhabitants of the colonies owe the ſame allegiance to the king as the people of Great Britain, and all due ſubordination to parliament. That they are entitled to the ſame rights, privileges, and immunities, as the people of Great Britain. That no taxes can be impoſed on a free people but by their own conſent, or that of their repreſentatives. That the inhabitants of the colonies are not, and cannot, be repreſented in the houſe of commons of Great Britain. That the only repreſentatives of the inhabitants of the colonies are thoſe choſen by themſelves; and that no taxes have been or can be impoſed upon them but by thoſe repreſentatives. That all ſupplies to the crown are free gifts from the people; and that therefore it is unreaſonable in the parliament of Great Britain to grant the property of the inhabitants of the colonies. That trial by jury is the right of a Britiſh ſubject. That the ſtamp act, by impoſing taxes, and extending the juriſdiction of the courts of admiralty beyond their ancient limits, has a tendency to ſubvert the rights and liberties of the coloniſts. That the duties impoſed by the late acts of parliament are grievous, and the payment of them impracticable. That, by the Britiſh manufactures which they purchaſe, they contribute to the ſupplies granted to the crown. That the reſtrictions on trade, impoſed by the late acts of parliament, will render them unable to purchaſe Britiſh manufactures. That the increaſe and proſperity of the colonies depends on the free enjoyment of their rights and liberties. And laſtly, that they have a right to petition the king, or either houſe of parliament.

Theſe reſolutions having been entered into, and an addreſs and petition to the king, a memorial and petition to the houſe of lords, and a petition to the houſe of commons, ſetting forth, more at large, the grievances mentioned in their reſolutions, having been prepared and agreed to; the congreſs diſſolved their meeting on the twenty-fifth of October, having ſat about eighteen days.

From comparing the reſolutions of congreſs with thoſe of the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, it is evident that the leading men in the other colonies were not yet prepared to go the full length which the people of New England wiſhed. It is true, the congreſs diſavow the authority of parliament to impoſe taxes upon the inhabitants of the colonies, and to abridge the trial by jury; but they complain of the other acts of parliament, for impoſing duties on merchandize, and reſtricting their trade, rather as grievances ariſing from an indiſcreet and impolitic exerciſe of a power which they did not call in queſtion, than as actual infractions of their conſtitutional rights.

Theſe were all the proceedings of this congreſs which were made public. The great temper and moderation manifeſted in the papers which were to be tranſmitted to England, were probably intended to counteract the effect of the riots and tumults which had preceded the meeting of the congreſs. The members of this body were aware that all appearance of defiance was carefully to be ſuppreſſed. Profeſſing loyalty to the king, and all due ſubordination to parliament, they endeavoured to exhibit themſelves as patient ſufferers, and as dutiful, although oppreſſed, ſubjects, rather ſoliciting the compaſſion than braving the power of the Britiſh nation.

By the meeting of ſo many deputies at New York, a communication was opened, an acquaintance was formed, and a correſpondence eſtabliſhed, between the leading men of all the colonies; and a foundation was thus laid for uniting their common efforts, whenever future circumſtances, and the attempts of future adminiſtrations, ſhould render it neceſſary. One effect of the mutual underſtanding which took place amongſt theſe leading men was indeed immediately diſcoverable; for, as ſoon as they returned to their reſpective homes, aſſociations were ſet on foot in all the colonies againſt the importation of Britiſh manufactures, ſuch importation to ceaſe after the firſt of January following, until the ſtamp act ſhould be repealed; a meaſure which was probably concerted before they left New York.

When the firſt of November arrived, the day on which the ſtamp act was to take effect, neither ſtamps were to be had nor officers to diſtribute them. The former had been lodged in places of ſecurity, to ſave them from deſtruction by the populace; and the latter had been either terrified into reſignation, or driven away by ill uſage. The courts of law were unable to proceed for want of thoſe papers which the act had rendered neceſſary; and a total ſtop was put to the adminiſtration of juſtice, except in criminal caſes, in which ſtamps were not required. Commerce too was at a ſtand, becauſe ſtamps were made neceſſary in the entry and clearance of veſſels at the cuſtom-houſes. Some of the merchants ventured to ſend their ſhips to ſea with certificates from the governors that ſtamps could not be procured; and in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay the council and aſſembly were daring enough to enter into a formal reſolution, declaring it to be lawful to tranſact buſineſs, as formerly, without the uſe of ſtamps.

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Such were the meaſures purſued and the ſteps taken in America, during the year 1765, for oppoſing the ſtamp act and procuring its repeal; and the inhabitants of the colonies were not more active and ſtrenuous in reſiſting, than the new miniſtry were remiſs and backward in iſſuing, orders for enforcing its execution. Although the reſolutions of the aſſembly of Virginia were laid before them not long after they came into office, and although, upon the twenty-ſeventh of Auguſt, the board of trade reported theſe reſolutions to contain a daring attack upon the conſtitution of Great Britain, and to require immediate attention; and although that board recommended orders to be forthwith ſent to the executive power, and to all the officers of government in Virginia, to exert themſelves vigorouſly in ſupport of the authority of parliament, and to exact a due obedience to all the laws of the land; yet this report of the board of trade, ſo urgent in its nature, was not taken into conſideration by the privy council until the third of October. On that day indeed, in a very full council, at which lord chancellor Camden aſſiſted, it was determined, that the ſubject of the report from the board of trade was of too high a nature for the deciſion of the king in council, and that it was proper only for the conſideration of parliament: As if it had not been the duty of the executive power to require a prompt obedience to all the acts of the legiſlature, and as if that power had a right to deliberate whether an act of parliament ſhould be carried into execution or not.

Such was the indeciſion of the new miniſtry reſpecting American affairs; and ſo indefinite, and even inexplicable *, was the nature of their diſpatches to the American governors, that the laſt blow was now given to the little energy which remained in the executive part of the colonial governments. Thoſe governors undoubtedly

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* See Secretary Conway's letters to Governor Fauquier, of Virginia, dated Sept. 14, 1765.

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thought that it was their duty to exact obedience to an act of parliament which extended to America; but being informed in their government diſpatches that this was a ſubject * under the conſideration of the privy council, a doubt might ariſe where there was none before; and with ſuch information before them, they could not be certain whether a ſtrenuous exertion in compelling ſubmiſſion to the ſtamp act might not expoſe them to the diſpleaſure of thoſe who now conducted the affairs of government.

In the party writings publiſhed about this time, and in certain parliamentary ſpeeches of a later date, which, from their brilliancy, gave the tone to public opinion, the ſtamp act has been conſidered as the introduction of a new ſyſtem in the government of the colonies. But whoever will take the trouble of examining the proceedings of former parliaments, and the various acts which they paſſed, without conſulting the inhabitants of the colonies, for confining and reſtricting their trade ſo as to make it ſerviceable to the mother-country; for regulating even their domeſtic concerns and purſuits, and for ſubjecting both their exports and imports, in certain caſes, to the payment of duties and taxes, which, when collected, were a part of the revenue of the kingdom, and applicable to ſuch purpoſes as the parliament thought fit to direct †; will ſee that the ſtamp act was not the introduction of a new, but the continuation and extenſion of the old ſyſtem under which they had always been governed. It was an application, not of a new, but of the old, principle upon which former parliaments had acted to the new and improved ſtate of the colonies, which enabled them to contribute more largely than

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* Secretary Conway's letter to Lieutenant Governor Fauquier, dated 14th Sept. 1765.

† See the following ſtatutes:—

12 Car. II. c. 18.
15 Car. II. c. 7.
25 Car. II. c. 7.
7 and 8 W. III. c. 22.
3 and 4 Ann, c. 5.
6 Ann, c. 30.
9 Ann, c. 17.
8 Geo. I. c. 15.
5 Geo. II. c. 15.
5 Geo. II. c. 22.
6 Geo. II. c. 13.
23 Geo. II. c. 29.

formerly towards raiſing a revenue for their own ſupport, defence, and protection.

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But whatever force there may be in theſe remarks, a clamour had been now raiſed in Great Britain as well as America; the mercantile and manufacturing intereſts were alarmed; petitions againſt the ſtamp act, ſaid to be encouraged by the miniſtry *, were tranſmitted from ſome of the principal ſea-port and manufacturing towns; and in the next ſeſſion of parliament, as had been foreſeen, a bill was introduced and ſupported by the whole weight and influence of the new adminiſtration for repealing the ſtamp act. The diſturbances in America were by them ſpoken of with ſome degree of tenderneſs. The inhabitants of the colonies were repreſented as an injured people; and the acts of violence which had been committed, were ſuppoſed to proceed from their deſpair. Mr. Grenville and his party ſtrongly oppoſed the bill, and charged the preſent miniſtry with creating the diſobedience and reſiſtance which had ariſen in America, by their intemperate and inconſiderate ſpeeches whilſt they were in oppoſition; but it was at length carried and paſſed through the houſe by a conſiderable majority. The miniſtry ſeem to have wiſhed to give ſatisfaction to all parties, as well thoſe who favoured, as thoſe who oppoſed, the ſtamp act, by introducing at the ſame time a declaratory bill, which cenſured and condemned the reſolutions of the American aſſemblies, and contained a formal declaration, that the Britiſh parliament had authority to make laws for binding the colonies in all caſes whatſoever. Theſe two bills accompanied each other through the two houſes of parliament, and received the royal aſſent on the eighteenth of March.

In the bill for repealing the ſtamp act, that act was declared to be repealed; not becauſe it was illegal, unconſtitutional, or unjuſt;

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* Mr. Grenville's ſpeech on the repeal of the ſtamp act.

nor becauſe it was arbitrary or oppreſſive; but ſimply becauſe it was inexpedient: And it was repealed abſolutely, and free from all terms or conditions.

The principle of the repeal, and the policy of the miniſtry in proceeding thus haſtily upon it, have been much queſtioned, and not without a ſtrong appearance of reaſon. If the objections of the colonial aſſemblies were deemed of no force or validity, it was the duty of the Britiſh parliament, for the preſervation of their own authority, inſtead of repealing, to have taken meaſures for inforcing the execution of the ſtamp act: On the other hand, if theſe objections were unanſwerable and irreſiſtible, it would have been wiſe, it would have been magnanimous and worthy of the repreſentatives of a great nation, not only to have repealed the ſtamp act, but by an open declaration to have renounced for ever the exerciſe of ſuch an unconſtitutional authority; and at the ſame time to have deviſed ſome other expedient for accompliſhing the end propoſed by the ſtamp act by leſs exceptionable means. Such a declaration would have quieted the minds of the coloniſts, and removed all future apprehenſions. But the Britiſh parliament purſued neither of theſe courſes. It is true they repealed the ſtamp act, but they at the ſame time paſſed the declaratory act, more arbitrary and more alarming than the other; and by this prepoſterous policy kept alive the jealouſy which the ſtamp act had excited, whilſt they abandoned all the benefits which it was deſigned to produce.

The inhabitants of the American colonies had reſiſted the execution of the ſtamp act, becauſe they thought it unconſtitutional: The inexpedience of it made no part of their legiſlative complaints. They denied the right of parliament to impoſe taxes upon them; but they never pretended that the taxes impoſed by the ſtamp act were greater than they were able to pay.

Here then a favourable occaſion preſented itſelf for the exerciſe of miniſterial wiſdom, which could not be better employed than in moderating the pretenſions of the colonial aſſemblies, ſettling the mode of their future contributions, and deviſing ſome permanent ſyſtem or arrangement for reconciling ſuch of their claims as were admiſſible, with that general and ſuperintending authority which the parliament ought to poſſeſs for preſerving an union of councils and of intereſts amongſt all the members of an extenſive empire. For ſuch a purpoſe no interval could be more proper than that which paſſed between the time when the execution of the ſtamp act was reſiſted in America, and the time of its repeal; whilſt the inhabitants of the colonies remained under the apprehenſion incident to a conſciouſneſs of having for the firſt time refuſed obedience to an act of the ſupreme power of the mother-country—but this opportunity was neglected. It was now become neceſſary for the miniſtry, by removing the cauſe, to allay, as ſpeedily as poſſible, the ſtorm which they themſelves, when in oppoſition, had aſſiſted to raiſe. Their credit as a party depended upon it: For after the oppoſition which they had made to the ſtamp act, had they proceeded to enforce the execution of it by the power of the mother-country, which was now in their hands, the battery which they had raiſed againſt the former adminiſtration might have been turned with double effect againſt themſelves. The ſtamp act was therefore to be repealed at all events; and by this premature and unqualified repeal it has been thought that the intereſt of the mother-country and the future tranquillity of the colonies were both ſacrificed to the convenience of party.

If, in the opinion of the miniſtry, the ſtamp act was accounted to be a bold, daring, and raſh meaſure, their opponents thought themſelves entitled to ſay that the act which repealed it was not leſs marked with the oppoſite qualities. It is not wiſe wantonly to provoke a quarrel: But when once a quarrel is begun, from whatever cauſe it might have originated, the grounds of difference on both

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both ſides ſhould be inquired into, and ſuch a ſettlement ſhould be made as might prevent future jealouſies and diſagreements: To end it in ſuch a manner as to leave the pretenſions on both ſides open, is weak and daſtardly policy;—it is a temporary expedient pregnant with future miſchief.

The repeal of the ſtamp act occaſioned very general rejoicings in America. The maſs of the people are in all countries led by the few: Looking only at the outſide of things, they eaſily take the impreſſion which is meant to be given: They had been taught to conſider the ſtamp act as the greateſt of all evils, and upon receiving intelligence of its repeal, gave themſelves up to unbounded joy. In this ſenſation, even the leading men very cordially joined; they ſaw in the repeal of the ſtamp act, a victory gained by the colonies over the mother-country, and in that victory the firſt dawn of future independence, They had experienced the benefits reſulting from an union of councils, and a general co-operation in the ſame cauſe; and conſidered the declaratory act, however formidable and offenſive in appearance, as a meaſure which was calculated to do them more ſervice than harm. They viewed it as a weak and impolitic bravado on the part of the Britiſh parliament, which would defeat its own purpoſe, by continuing the alarm which had been excited, and by cementing the union which had taken place amongſt the colonies.

The courts of juſtice now reſumed their functions; the aſſemblies in the different provinces were called; and mutual congratulations paſſed between them and their governors. Their late ill-humour gave a poignancy to their preſent enjoyments; and all paſt animoſities ſeemed for a time to be forgotten.

But even during this ſeaſon of feſtivity, there were not wanting ſome, who by publications in the newſpapers cautioned their countrymen againſt giving way to intemperate joy; they reminded them, that although the ſtamp act was repealed, its principle had not been given up: That the Britiſh parliament perſevered in maintaining their right of taxation, and by paſſing the declaratory act affected to poſſeſs a ſtill higher and more arbitrary power than the authors of the ſtamp act had ventured to exerciſe: That the repeal of the ſtamp act had rather been extorted than freely granted, and that for this boon they were more indebted to their own wiſdom and firmneſs, than to the generoſity of the Britiſh nation: That future adminiſtrations and future parliaments might again attempt to impoſe taxes upon them; and that it was therefore incumbent upon the inhabitants of the colonies to be vigilant and attentive, and not ſuffer themſelves to be lulled into a ſtate of thoughtleſs ſecurity: That it was their duty, whilſt it was in their power, to provide againſt the worſt that might happen: That with this view they ought to encourage the breeding of ſheep, for the purpoſe of acquiring a ſtock of wool, the culture of flax, hemp, and cotton, and the fabrication of ſuch of the coarſer Britiſh manufactures as are moſt eſſentially neceſſary for the common purpoſes of life; by which means they might with leſs inconvenience to themſelves, when future occaſions ſhould require it, enter into non-importation agreements, and abſtain from the uſe and conſumption of Britiſh manufactures, which they ſaw was likely to be the moſt effectual mode of oppoſition to the illegal exertions of power on the part of the mother-country. By ſuch publications, attempts were made to keep alive and nouriſh that ſpirit of jealouſy and diſtruſt, which the declaratory act was ſo well calculated to inſpire.

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The ſecretary of ſtate, in the diſpatches ſent to the American governors upon the repeal of the ſtamp act, took occaſion to ſet forth the grace and condeſcenſion of the king and parliament in liſtening to the complaints of the inhabitants of the colonies; and their lenity, tenderneſs, moderation, and forbearance, manifeſted in the repeal of that act, notwithſtanding the provocation which they had received

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by the forcible reſiſtance that had been made to the execution of it; and intimated that ſuitable returns of gratitude, duty, affection, and ſubmiſſion, would be expected on the part of the colonies. Theſe were held forth as themes for the governors to enlarge upon in their ſpeeches to the aſſemblies. And it muſt be confeſſed that thoſe aſſemblies were not backward in voting addreſſes of thanks, nor did they fall ſhort of the ſecretary's expectations in profeſſions of loyalty, duty, and affection to the king; but in what regarded the parliament they were far from being explicit: And it very ſoon appeared that ſome of them, inſtead of being eager to give ſubſtantial proofs of ſubordination to the Britiſh parliament, were ſtudious to avoid even the appearance of it.

At the time of repealing the ſtamp act, the parliament alſo voted an addreſs to be preſented to his majeſty, requeſting that he would be pleaſed to inſtruct the governors in America to make requiſitions to the colonial aſſemblies for granting compenſation to ſuch individuals as had ſuffered in their private property in conſequence of the tumults. Theſe requiſitions were accordingly made in ſuch of the colonies where any loſs of private property had been ſuſtained, and particularly in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, where the tumults had been the moſt outrageous. But the aſſembly of that province, inſtead of laying hold of this opportunity to ſhew their reſpect to the Britiſh parliament, and at the ſame time to do an act of juſtice, quarrelled with their governor, under a pretence that he had ſet forth the requiſition in ſtronger and more peremptory terms than he was warranted to do by the ſecretary of ſtate's letter; and in an addreſs preſented to him on this occaſion, after cenſuring the manner in which he had communicated the requiſition, they coldly tell him, "That "they will embrace the firſt convenient opportunity to conſider and "act upon ſecretary Conway's recommendation," without taking the leaſt notice of the reſolution of parliament. The governor made repeated

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repeated applications to them, but from various pretences they delayed paſſing an act to compenſate the ſufferers for more than ſix months; nor was it done until the inhabitants of the town of Boſton inſtructed their repreſentatives to vote for it, and informed them that the lords of the treaſury in England had refuſed to pay the colony the money voted by parliament in the year 1763, until compenſation was firſt made to theſe ſufferers: And when the act was at laſt paſſed, it contained a clauſe of indemnity to the offenders in the riots, which ſhewed that theſe were not leſs the objects of that aſſembly's care and attention, than the unfortunate ſufferers. A ſimilar backwardneſs appeared in the colonies of Rhode Iſland and New York; but in the province of Maryland the aſſembly were eager to teſtify their reſpect for the recommendation of parliament, and without delay voted compenſation to the only individual who had ſuffered in that province: And in the other colonies no loſſes were ſuſtained.

In the ſame ſeſſion of parliament in which the ſtamp act had been repealed, an act was paſſed for amending the annual mutiny act, which it had been uſual to paſs, for the government of the troops in America. The intention of the amendment was to provide for the more comfortable ſubſiſtence of thoſe troops by ſupplying them with ſalt, vinegar, and beer or cyder; and the act directed that the expence incurred by the ſupply of theſe articles ſhould be raiſed by the aſſemblies of the reſpective colonies in which the troops were quartered. It ſo happened, by the accidental march of ſome troops into the province of New York, that the governor of that province had occaſion, on the day after he had communicated to the aſſembly the repeal of the ſtamp act, to apply to them for quarters for theſe troops, and in his meſſage he ſpecified the additional articles of ſalt, vinegar, beer or cyder, which were required to be furniſhed under the amended mutiny act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament. He alſo informed them that the troops were upon their march, and were daily expected at New York. The aſſembly however was in no haſte to take his meſſage into conſideration, nor did they preſent an addreſs in anſwer to it until after the arrival of the troops, who in the mean time were put to ſome inconvenience for want of quarters. In their addreſs, the aſſembly avoided noticing the act of parliament: They affected to conſider the requiſition as coming ſolely from the king; and agreed to furniſh quarters for the troops with ſuch neceſſaries only as they had been formerly accuſtomed to furniſh. This anſwer not proving ſatisfactory to the governor, another meſſage was ſent; and after various meſſages and addreſſes, the aſſembly at laſt poſitively refuſed to ſupply the troops with the additional articles required by the amendment made to the mutiny act, ſeeming to conſider it as not differing in principle from the ſtamp act, ſo far as it impoſed a new burthen upon them. A diſinclination to comply with this act of parliament appeared in ſeveral of the other colonies where troops were ſtationed; and in no one of them was the act ſpecifically carried into execution. Means, it is true, were fallen upon to ſatisfy the troops: But the Britiſh parliament was not to be gratified, even at the ſmall expence of furniſhing the inconſiderable articles of ſalt, vinegar, and ſmall beer.

Such were the returns made in America to the grace and condeſcenſion of the king and parliament in repealing the ſtamp act. But the Rockingham adminiſtration did not continue long enough in power to receive official accounts of the effect of their meaſures for reſtoring peace and tranquillity to the colonies. In the month of July of the preſent year, they were diſmiſſed from their employments, and a new adminiſtration was formed, at the head of which was the duke of Grafton, aided by the ſplendid talents, the popular virtues, and energetic powers of Mr. Pitt, now created earl of Chatham, who accepted the office of lord privy ſeal, and with whoſe advice the new arrangements were ſaid to have been made. 1766.

The firſt act of this new adminiſtration which related to America ſerves to ſhew, that although many of the members of it had voted for the repeal of the ſtamp act, yet in reality they differed not much in principle from thoſe who were the authors of it. In the debates which that act had occaſioned in parliament, in ſome of the political pamphlets publiſhed in America, and in the reſolutions of ſome of the colonial aſſemblies, a diſtinction had been taken between external and internal taxation, that is, between raiſing money from the colonies by the impoſition of duties on the importation or exportation of merchandize, and raiſing it internally in the way propoſed by the ſtamp act: And on theſe occaſions it had been ſaid, that although the colonies never would agree to the latter, they had already ſubmitted to the former, which was neceſſary for the regulation of trade; and that the Britiſh parliament ought to be contented with the exerciſe of this acknowledged right, leaving to the colonial aſſemblies the powers of internal taxation, and of regulating the domeſtic policy of the reſpective provinces, which ſeemed to be the objects for which ſuch aſſemblies were originally inſtituted, and of the due exerciſe of which powers, their local information enabled them to be more competent judges than the Britiſh parliament could pretend to be. 1767.

The new miniſtry laying hold of this diſtinction, and availing themſelves of the ſuppoſed conceſſion, procured an act of parliament to be paſſed for impoſing certain duties on glaſs, paper, paſteboard, white and red lead, painter's colours, and tea, payable upon the importation of theſe articles into the American colonies; which duties, when collected, were made applicable, in the firſt place, to making proviſion for the adminiſtration of juſtice, and the ſupport

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of civil government, in ſuch of the colonies where it ſhould be neceſſary, and the reſidue to be paid into the exchequer in England, and to be applicable to the ſame uſes as the former duties impoſed in the year 1764. The act alſo contained a clauſe for diſcontinuing the drawback payable on the exportation of china-ware to America, and made ſome new proviſions for preventing the clandeſtine running of goods in the colonies. And at the ſame time another act was paſſed for putting theſe, and all the other cuſtoms and duties payable in America by any former act of parliament, under the management of commiſſioners, who were to be reſident in that country.

In the ſame ſeſſion too, the diſpatches of the governor of New York, which announced the refuſal of the aſſembly of that province to comply with the mutiny act, were laid before the parliament: And timidly indulgent as the members of this parliament had heretofore ſhewed themſelves, in overlooking the rebellious outrages which had been committed, and the daring inſurrections which had appeared in America, in oppoſition to the ſtamp act, they now ſeemed determined that the aſſembly of New York ſhould feel the weight of their diſpleaſure for this recent act of diſobedience; and an act was accordingly paſſed for ſuſpending them from the exerciſe of all their legiſlative functions, until they ſhould yield obedience to the act of parliament for quartering the troops. The Rockingham party, now out of office, could not in decency oppoſe this coercive meaſure, the object of which was to enforce obedience to an act of parliament which they, when in power, had procured to be paſſed.

Theſe acts were all introduced and ſupported by the influence of the new miniſtry. They, like the miniſtry which had patronized the ſtamp act, were conſcious that the mother-country, bending under the weight and preſſure of accumulated taxes, with the ſinews of her ſtrength ſtretched to the utmoſt poſſible extent, ſtood in need of every aſſiſtance. Like them too they were convinced that the American colonies were the leaſt burthened of all the Britiſh dominions; and that it was the duty of thoſe who were entruſted with the adminiſtration of government to require them to furniſh a due proportion towards the general expence. It was alſo thought highly probable, that as the colonies had been ſo lately gratified with the repeal of the obnoxious ſtamp act, they would the more readily ſubmit to an act which required their contribution in a ſhape and form accommodated in ſome degree to the political ſpeculations of the time, and to the ideas of ſome of thoſe friends of the colonies who had eſpouſed their cauſe in the Britiſh parliament. Perhaps too it was thought that the colonies would have been more eaſily induced to yield to this mode of taxation, as this would tend to refute the aſperſions of their enemies, who charged them with ingratitude, and reproached them with an inclination to avail themſelves of the protection of the mother-country, and of all the benefits which they enjoyed under the Britiſh government, without contributing towards its ſupport. Such, it may be ſuppoſed, were ſome of the motives which influenced the Britiſh miniſtry about this period.

But the leading men in the colonies, and their political writers, thought very differently. In the courſe of their ſpeculations on the ſubject of the ſtamp act, they had been led into a train of thought and conſequent reaſoning that were applicable not only to the act which was the immediate object of their ſpeculation, but to all the other acts of the Britiſh parliament which extended to America. Some of theſe had exiſted for more than a century, and had been ſanctioned by time and by conſtant and uninterrupted acquieſcence. To have queſtioned their validity would have been offering violence to public opinion. Theſe writers therefore were prudent enough for the preſent to avoid puſhing their arguments to ſuch a length; but they were not the leſs anxious to guard their countrymen againſt

ſubmitting

Introduction. 1767. ſubmitting to any farther extenſion of the like authority. For this purpoſe, the paſſing of the ſtamp act was to be held out as a new æra in their political hiſtory, and as the commencement of a new ſyſtem on the part of Great Britain. That act had been condemned as illegal and unconſtitutional. Thoſe which preceded it, although upon their grounds of argument not leſs liable to objection, yet having been conſecrated by time, were to be thrown into the back ground, and the ſtamp act alone was to be put forward as the prominent figure, by a compariſon with which the legality or illegality of every ſubſequent act of parliament for laying duties or taxes on America was to be eſtimated.

It required no great reach of thought to perceive that the late act which impoſed duties on certain articles of merchandize imported from Great Britain into the colonies, differed not in principle from the ſtamp act. The object of both was to raiſe a revenue from the colonies; in the raiſing of which, and in the diſpoſal of it when raiſed, the colonial aſſemblies were to have no concern: The articles upon which the duties were impoſed, were become ſo neceſſary that they could not be diſpenſed with without great inconvenience to the inhabitants of the colonies; and they were ſuch as either could not be raiſed in America, or in the raiſing and manufacture of which it was not the intereſt of the coloniſts to be employed.

On this ground their political writers ſet to work. They maintained that the new act was a branch of the ſame ſyſtem which had been introduced in Mr. Grenville's adminiſtration for enſlaving America: That it was in every reſpect as unconſtitutional as the ſtamp act: That the mother-country, guided by ſuch councils and purſuing ſuch arbitrary meaſures, was rather to be conſidered as a malignant ſtep-mother than an indulgent parent: That ſhe envied the proſperity of the colonies, and ſeemed determined to cruſh and keep them down: And that it was therefore a duty which the inhabitants of the colonies owed not only to themſelves but to their poſterity, to withſtand ſuch illegal exactions; becauſe, if they ſubmitted to one, it would afford a precedent for another, and that to a third; until, by the continued renewal and extenſion of ſuch impoſitions, they would be drained of the little wealth they poſſeſſed, and be at laſt reduced to poverty and diſtreſs. Such were the arguments uſed to excite an oppoſition to the new act of parliament amongſt the people of the colonies; and meeting with no contradiction, the effect which they would have upon the public mind may be eaſily conceived.

The inattention of government to theſe publications was one great cauſe of haſtening the American revolution. For whilſt the colonial newſpapers were filled with inflammatory publications, tending to excite jealouſy and promote diſcontent, to throw ſuſpicions on every act of the Britiſh government extending to America, and by degrees to leſſen that veneration for the mother-country with which the inhabitants of, at leaſt a part of, the Britiſh colonies were once impreſſed; only one or two writerswere employed on the other ſide to counteract the effects of ſuch ſeditious publications, to ſupport the cauſe of the mother-country, and for a time to keep the courſe of public opinion ſuſpended, until the matters in diſpute could be fairly and diſpaſſionately conſidered.

It is to the province of Maſſachuſets Bay that we are henceforward to look for thoſe cauſes which had a more immediate influence in accelerating the American revolution. The foundation of this revolution was indeed laid in the meeting of the firſt congreſs; not perhaps by any actual agreement to reſiſt the power of the mother-country, but by incorporating and uniting the grievances of all the colonies, and making them the ſubject of common complaint. Whence it followed, that whenever afterwards any ſingle colony brought upon itſelf the diſpleaſure of the mother-country, the cauſe of

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of that colony was eſpouſed by all the reſt; and the refractory ungovernable ſpirit of the inhabitants of Maſſachuſets Bay, for ever running into exceſſes, and breaking forth into outrages againſt lawful authority, and thereby bringing down upon the province the conſequent animadverſions and chaſtiſements of the mother-country, furniſhed to the aſſemblies of the other colonies a never-failing ſource of diſquiet, uneaſineſs, remonſtrance and complaint; until, by ſucceſſive altercations with government, their paſſions became inflamed, reſentment was kindled, and all reſpect for the mother-country being in time thrown aſide, the bonds of union which connected her with the colonies were at laſt violently rent aſunder. The tranſactions in this province will therefore occupy a principal part in the following pages, down to the year 1774.

There had been no good agreement between the governor* and the inhabitants of Maſſachuſets Bay from the time of the ſtamp act. He had on that, and indeed on every other occaſion, ſhewn himſelf active and zealous in maintaining the authority of the mother-country, as far as it was in his power; and this conduct of itſelf was ſufficient to make him unpopular. He had lived long enough in the province to be fully acquainted with the character of the people over whom he preſided, and by his knowledge and experience was enabled to penetrate into their deſigns, which he did not fail to lay open to the Britiſh miniſtry. The animadverſions on their conduct contained in ſome of the government diſpatches, which it was neceſſary to lay before the aſſembly, diſcovered to them the nature of their governor's communications; and they, on their part, charged him with miſrepreſentation. In the preceding year he had exerciſed the prerogative of putting a negative on ſome of the violent men of the patriotic party, whom the aſſembly had elected as counſellors. The excluded members felt this as a groſs affront, and became his inveterate enemies. Their influence with the people was great, and they ſcrupled not to uſe it in ſtirring them up to thwart the governor, gratifying their private reſentment at the expence of the public tranquillity: And to the efforts of theſe reſtleſs and diſcontented men may, in part, be aſcribed the perturbed and unquiet ſtate of this province during the whole of the enſuing year.

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* Sir Francis Bernard.

The firſt ſymptoms of a determined oppoſition to the act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament for impoſing duties in America appeared at Boſton in the month of October of the preceding year; where the inhabitants, at a meeting held in their town-hall, agreed to enter into aſſociations to encourage manufactures amongſt themſelves, to diſcountenance luxuries of all ſorts, and to diſcontinue the importation from Great Britain of all ſuch ſuperfluous articles of dreſs and clothing as neceſſity did not abſolutely require. But the act which gave them moſt uneaſineſs was that which eſtabliſhed a board of cuſtoms in America. Under the inſpection and ſuperintendence of that board they dreaded a more rigorous execution of the laws of trade than they had been yet accuſtomed to. Their apprehenſions were the greater becauſe the reſidence of this board was fixed to be at Boſton: And their chagrin was the more diſtreſſing, from a conviction that this, of all the acts which had been paſſed, was the leaſt liable to be aſſailed by objections of any conſiderable weight or importance.

When the aſſembly of that province met in the month of January of the preſent year, they entered upon a general conſideration of grievances. A petition was prepared, to be preſented to the king, complaining not only of the acts of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, but of every other act which had been paſſed for impoſing duties in America ſince the year 1763. A very long letter was written to their agent in England, inſtructing him how to controvert theſe acts

upon

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upon grounds of natural right, and upon general principles of equity, policy, and commerce; and letters were alſo tranſmitted to the lords of the treaſury, the ſecretaries of ſtate, the marquis of Rockingham, the earl of Chatham, and lord Camden, pleading the cauſe of America, and intreating the exertion of their influence and abilities in furthering the object of the petition.

Theſe ſteps having been taken for inducing a favourable hearing of their complaints in England, they now had recourſe to the ſame kind of policy which had before been ſucceſsfully practiſed in oppoſing the ſtamp act; thinking the preſent a favourable opportunity for renewing their correſpondence with the other colonial aſſemblies, and for ſtimulating them to prefer ſimilar complaints. With this view a circular letter was addreſſed to the aſſemblies of all the other colonies, communicating the deliberations of the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, on the late acts of parliament for impoſing duties in America; giving a full detail of the grounds of argument which they had uſed to expoſe the evil tendency of theſe acts, in their petition to the king, in the inſtructions to their agent, and in their letters to the great officers of ſtate in England; expreſſing a hope that meaſures of a ſimilar nature would be adopted by all the aſſemblies upon the continent; and intimating a readineſs and a wiſh to receive from theſe aſſemblies a communication of ſuch other meaſures as might to them appear neceſſary to be purſued for the general intereſt of the whole.

This letter bore date the 11th of February. A copy of it was without delay ſent to England by the governor, and gave much diſpleaſure to the Britiſh adminiſtration. They viewed it as a wicked attempt in the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay to light up again the flames of diſcord in the colonies, and as the commencement of a plan of regular oppoſition to the authority of the mother-country. And in order to counteract its effects, the ſecretary of ſtate for

American affairs*, on the 22d of April, wrote an admonitory letter to the governors of the colonies, to be by them laid before their aſſemblies, in which the circular letter of the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay was condemned as a meaſure of a moſt dangerous and factious tendency, calculated to inflame the minds of his majeſty's good ſubjects in the colonies, to promote an unwarrantable combination, to excite an oppoſition to the authority of parliament, and to ſubvert the true principles of the conſtitution: And the colonial aſſemblies were admoniſhed not to ſuffer themſelves to be led away from their duty, nor to give any countenance to this miſchievous effort of the Maſſachuſets Bay aſſembly for exciting diſcord; but rather to treat it with the contempt it deſerved.

But this adminiſtration did not accord with the ſentiments of the leading men in the colonies. They maintained that the colonial aſſemblies had a right to conſult together and freely to communicate their obſervations to each other, on the ſubject of their common grievances; and they conſidered the interference of the Britiſh miniſtry, on the preſent occaſion, as an unjuſtifiable attempt to diſcourage and prevent the inhabitants of the colonies from exerciſing the undoubted right of Britiſh ſubjects to prefer their united ſupplications to the throne whenever they thought themſelves aggrieved.

And thus the letter from the ſecretary of ſtate became the ſubject of ſevere animadverſion, and gave occaſion to ſome new and angry reſolutions in ſeveral of the colonial aſſemblies: Whilſt the circular letter from Maſſachuſets Bay was well received and approved of, and produced all the effect which was expected from it. Petitions formed on the model of that of Maſſachuſets Bay were tranſmitted to England from all the colonies.

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* A new arrangement took place at the beginning of the preſent year, in the ſecretary of ſtate's office; a third ſecretary being appointed for the department of the colonies.

Thoſe ſhades of difference which had originally characterized the reſolutions of the different aſſemblies, and which were moſt conſpicuous in thoſe of Maſſachuſets Bay and Virginia, now began to diſappear. The republican notions and high pretenſions of the people of New England were daily gaining ground: And the act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament for impoſing duties, although apparently framed for the purpoſe of coinciding with the political creed of the ſouthern colonies, was now as much condemned in the aſſembly of Virginia as it had been in that of Maſſachuſets Bay; the aſſembly of Virginia getting rid of their former diſtinction between internal taxes, by maintaining that the duties payable by this act, although on the importation of merchandize, were as much internal as thoſe of the ſtamp act, becauſe they were impoſed not for the purpoſe of regulation, but of raiſing a revenue.

The letter from the ſecretary of ſtate to the governor of Maſſachuſets Bay inſtructed him to require the aſſembly of his province to reſcind the reſolution of the preceding ſeſſion, which had given birth to the circular letter, as it appeared to have paſſed near the end of the aſſembly, and in a thin houſe; and if they ſhould refuſe, he was directed to diſſolve them. This requiſition was accordingly made in the month of June; and the aſſembly, having refuſed to comply with it by a majority of ninety-two againſt ſeventeen, was diſſolved by the governor, in purſuance of his inſtructions.

Previous to the diſſolution of the aſſembly, the ill-humour, diſcontent, chagrin, and vexation of the inhabitants of Boſton, aggravated by ſome new regulations introduced by the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms for checking the clandeſtine practices of the former, in the landing and ſhipping of goods, broke forth into ſuch an open and violent reſiſtance of lawful authority, as threatened ſpeedily to involve the whole province in rebellion.

The ſloop Liberty, belonging to John Hancock, one of their principal merchants, had arrived in the harbour of Boſton, laden with wine, and a tide-waiter had been put on board to prevent the cargo from being landed, until ſhe ſhould be entered at the cuſtom-houſe and receive a permit to unlade. On the night after her arrival, and before ſhe was entered at the cuſtom-houſe, the maſter of the veſſel, having in vain tampered with the preventive officer to obtain his permiſſion, at laſt forcibly locked him up in the cabin, and proceeded to diſcharge the wine; taking oil from the ſhore in lieu of it, with which the veſſel was reladen before the morning. Information of this outrageous proceeding having been given at the cuſtom-houſe, the collector, on the evening of the following day, being the 10th of June, made a ſeizure of the ſloop, and put her for ſafety under the protection of the Romney ſhip of war. The ſloop was accordingly removed from the wharf where ſhe lay, and moored in the harbour under the ſtern of the Romney. This was no ſooner ſeen from the ſhore than a mob aſſembled; the collector and controller of the cuſtoms were beaten and abuſed, and in making their eſcape were pelted with ſtones: The commiſſioners of the cuſtoms were threatened, their houſes were attacked, and they themſelves were obliged to take refuge on board the Romney: And finally, the collector's boat was carried in triumph, and burnt before the door of the owner of the ſloop. Such were the riotous proceedings on the evening of the ſeizure of the ſloop Liberty.

On the following day the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms applied to the governor for protection: Their application was by him communicated to the council and aſſembly, whoſe advice and aſſiſtance he requeſted; but advice was not given, nor aſſiſtance offered—the commiſſioners met with no protection: And the threats againſt them being continued, they were at laſt obliged to retire for ſafety to Caſtle William, a fortreſs ſituated upon an iſland at the mouth of the harbour. In the mean time, on the 14th of June, a town meeting was held, and ſo far were the inhabitants of Boſton from diſcountenancing the reſiſtance which had been made to lawful authority, that they preſented a remonſtrance to the governor on the ſeizure of the ſloop, and the circumſtance of her being put under the protection of a ſhip of war; and accompanied it with this ſtrange requeſt, that he would order his majeſty's ſhip the Romney out of the harbour. All this happened during the ſitting of the council and aſſembly; and yet no one ſtep was taken by them, for aſſiſting the governor in reſtoring energy to government, or in protecting its officers in the execution of their duty.

Repreſentations on the ſubject of this tumult and inſurrection were made not only by the governor but by the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms to the Britiſh miniſtry; and troops were ordered to be ſent to Boſton to aid the civil power. A rumour of the orders which had been given having reached Boſton before the arrival of the troops, filled the inhabitants with new alarms and apprehenſions; and a town meeting being called on the 12th of September, a petition from the inhabitants was preſented to the governor, intreating him to convene the general aſſembly. To this petition the governor anſwered, that he had diſſolved the aſſembly in conſequence of an inſtruction, and that it was not in his power to call another until he received his majeſty's orders for that purpoſe. The governor's anſwer did not contribute to allay the ferment which the expected arrival of the troops had occaſioned; and the people of Boſton, goaded on by their factious and diſcontented leaders, conceived and adopted in their preſent ſtate of perplexity the new and daring reſolution of aſſembling a convention of the people. For this purpoſe the town meeting was adjourned to the following day, when they voted and reſolved, that they were under no obligation of ſubmitting to laws to which they had not given their conſent, either by themſelves or their repreſentatives, that the levying of money within the province for the uſe of the crown, without the conſent of the general aſſembly, is a violation of their charter and of their natural rights as ſubjects, declared in the ſtatute of the 1 W. & M.; that the ſending an armed force amongſt them without their conſent, would be an infringement of theſe rights, and the employing of ſuch a force to aid the execution of laws to which they had not given their conſent, an intolerable grievance. And as the governor had declared himſelf unable to call a general aſſembly for the redreſs of grievances, they reſolved it to be expedient that a convention of the people ſhould be held. They appointed four perſons to repreſent them in this convention, one of whom was the owner of the ſloop, the ſeizure of which had occaſioned the tumult. They directed the ſelect men to write to the ſelect men of the other towns in the province, to inform them of theſe proceedings at the town meeting of Boſton, and to propoſe a convention to be held on the 22d of the ſame month. They reſolved that the inhabitants of Boſton ſhould be requeſted to provide themſelves with arms, purſuant to a law of the province which had been too much neglected, aſſigning as a reaſon for this vote, a prevailing apprehenſion of an approaching war with France; and laſtly, they requeſted that the miniſters of the town would ſet apart the following Tueſday as a day of faſting and prayer.

In purſuance of theſe votes, letters were written by the ſelect men; and deputies were appointed to meet in the propoſed convention by all the townſhips in the province, that of Hatfield alone excepted; the inhabitants of which not only refuſed to appoint deputies for the convention, but wrote an expoſtulatory letter to the ſelect men of Boſton, upbraiding the inhabitants of that town with their riotous behaviour, charging them with being the cauſe, by their miſconduct, why troops were to be ſent into the province; admoniſhing them that their future orderly behaviour was the only way to procure a

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removal of the troops, and proteſting againſt the propoſed convention as a meaſure that was unconſtitutional, illegal, and unjuſtifiable, ſubverſive of government, and deſtructive of the peace of ſociety.

The convention met on the twenty-ſecond of September, and conſiſted of deputies from ninety-eight towns and eight diſtricts. Their firſt act was to ſend a deputation to the governor with a meſſage, in which they diſclaim all pretence to authoritative or governmental acts, allege that they were met, in that dark and diſtreſsful time, only to conſult and adviſe ſuch meaſures as might promote the peace of his majeſty's ſubjects in that province, and conclude with intreating him to call an aſſembly. The governor refuſed to receive their meſſage, and the next day iſſued a proclamation in which he warned them of their danger, if they ſhould proceed to any kind of buſineſs, admoniſhed them to diſperſe, and threatened, if they did not, to aſſert the prerogative of the crown in a more public manner.

Whether the members of this convention were diſconcerted by the governor's firmneſs, or whether they began to think that they had gone too far in aſſembling not only without but againſt his conſent, is uncertain: But their proceedings during their ſhort ſeſſion were uncommonly mild and moderate, and did not ſeem to correſpond with the temper of mind manifeſted in the votes of the town meeting at Boſton. Their proceedings were only a petition to be preſented to the king againſt the late acts of parliament, and a report ſtating the cauſes of their meeting, and the objects which they had taken into conſideration. In this report they again diſclaimed all pretence to authority, recommended to the people to pay deference to government, and wait with patience the reſult of his majeſty's wiſdom and clemency, and promiſed for themſelves to aſſiſt the civil magiſtrate in preſerving the peace. Theſe papers having been prepared and diſpatched to their agent in England, their meeting was

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diſſolved on the twenty-ninth of September, the day on which the firſt diviſion of the troops arrived at Boſton.

Upon the arrival of the troops ſome difficulties aroſe about quartering them; the council propoſing that they ſhould be ſent to Caſtle William, where barracks were already erected, inſtead of being quartered in the town, where there were none; but it was neceſſary that the troops ſhould be quartered in the place where their aſſiſtance was required: And all objections were at laſt obviated by hiring ſome empty houſes in the town, which were fitted up and converted into barracks. The turbulence of the people being reſtrained by the preſence of the troops, peace was thus for a time reſtored to Boſton. The commiſſioners and other officers of the cuſtoms returned from Caſtle William; and buſineſs began to be carried on in its uſual courſe.

In the province of New York the aſſembly having made ſubmiſſion, and complied with the terms of the mutiny act, were reſtored to the exerciſe of their legiſlative functions.

The ſucceſs of the circular letter from the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay in exciting the other colonial aſſemblies to petition for a redreſs of grievances has been already noticed. But petitions were not the only means to which they truſted for relief. Aſſociations were again reſorted to for diſtreſſing the trade of the mother-country, and for influencing the mercantile and manufacturing intereſt in England to beſtir themſelves in behalf of the colonies. To have reſtrained all importation from Great Britain would at that time have diſtreſſed themſelves more than thoſe whom they meant to injure: It was therefore propoſed, that the importation of the more neceſſary articles of merchandize ſhould be continued, and thoſe only which were leſs neceſſary be prohibited. The concurrence of the merchants was indiſpenſable: And as the neceſſary articles of merchandize were different in different colonies, it became no eaſy matter to adjuſt

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Such were the principal tranſactions in America during the year 1768.

1769. Upon the meeting of the parliament in England, the diſorderly and diſobedient ſtate of the province of Maſſachuſets Bay was mentioned in the ſpeech from the throne, and became the ſubject of debate early in the ſeſſion.

The miniſtry now ſeemed determined to act with more than uſual vigour in attempting to ſubdue that daring ſpirit of reſiſtance to the authority of parliament, which had ſhewn itſelf by this time in ſome degree in all the colonies, but moſt unjuſtifiably in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, in the provoking tranſactions of the preceding year. Theſe tranſactions were accordingly made the ground of ſundry parliamentary reſolutions, in which they were recited with every circumſtance of aggravation, and branded with every epithet of diſapprobation which could ſerve to mark the high diſpleaſure of the Britiſh parliament. The town of Boſton was declared to be in a ſtate of diſorder and diſobedience to law. The diſinclination of the council and aſſembly to aſſiſt in ſuppreſſing the riots was ſeverely cenſured; and the neceſſity of ſending a military force to aid the civil power was fully juſtified. Theſe reſolutions having been agreed to and paſſed, a joint addreſs from both houſes of parliament was preſented to his majeſty, approving of the ſteps which had been already taken for maintaining the authority of the mother-country, and declaring their readineſs to concur in ſuch other meaſures as might be thought neceſſary for that purpoſe. The addreſs concluded with recommending to his majeſty to bring the authors of the diſturbances to exemplary puniſhment; to inſtruct governor Bernard of Maſſachuſets Bay to tranſmit to England full information of all treaſonable acts committed within his province during the preceding year, together with the names of the offenders; to revive the execution of the ſtatute of 35 Hen. VIII. for trying within the realm of England treaſons committed beyond the ſeas; and to iſſue a ſpecial commiſſion for that purpoſe, if upon receiving governor Bernard's report ſuch a proceeding ſhould appear to be neceſſary.

Theſe reſolutions and this addreſs, although finally paſſed by a great majority, were not voted without conſiderable oppoſition. The Rockingham and Grenville parties united their force to oppoſe them, and diſtreſs the miniſtry. The irregularities and extravagances of the people of Boſton (for in ſuch gentle terms were they ſpoken of) were either palliated or excuſed. It was ſaid that this ſimple and inoffenſive people had been driven to madneſs when they perceived that the taxes of which they now complained were not laid upon them by the influence of their enemies, but of their friends; of thoſe friends too who had oppoſed the ſtamp act, and had totally denied to the Britiſh parliament the right of impoſing taxes in America. And the oppoſition, far from ſeeming to ſhrink from their defence, on the contrary upbraided the miniſtry with giving them the appellation of rebellious and diſobedient ſubjects.

Such ſpeeches, whatever might be the intention of thoſe who made them, were deſtructive of the authority which the parliament wiſhed to maintain. They often gave the tone to the ſubſequent meaſures purſued by the American patriots, who exerted themſelves to verify the predictions which their friends in parliament had previouſly made. They were the means of raiſing a party in favour of America, even in Great Britain. And on the preſent occaſion they were

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were calculated to encourage the inhabitants of Maſſachuſets Bay to perſiſt in their refractory courſe, when they found that even the provoking inſults offered to government in the preceding year met with ſuch able defenders in the Britiſh parliament.

That part of the miniſterial plan which adviſed the execution of the almoſt obſolete ſtatute of the 35 Hen. VIII. for the trial of treaſons committed beyond the ſeas, gave the moſt ſerious concern to all thoſe inhabitants of the colonies whoſe attachment to the mother-country was yet unſhaken. It was a meaſure of ſeverity which the miniſtry probably did not intend to execute; but for that reaſon it ought not to have been threatened. To be torn from a man's family and friends, tranſported acroſs an extenſive ocean, landed in a ſtrange country as a priſoner and criminal, and tried by a jury not of his vicinage but of ſtrangers, unacquainted with him or his character, and whom even the important formality of bringing the priſoner from ſuch a diſtance to England for trial would be apt to impreſs with an idea of extraordinary guilt—all theſe, with others which might be mentioned, were circumſtances of ſuch hardſhip as could not fail to arreſt the attention of even the moſt careleſs and unthinking coloniſt, and incline him to queſtion the foundation of an authority liable to be exerciſed in a way ſo oppreſſive. In fact, the threatened revival of this arbitrary ſtatute alienated the affection of the loyal and well-diſpoſed amongſt the inhabitants of the colonies more than any thing which the Britiſh parliament had yet attempted. Even thoſe who were the moſt friendly to government, and who on other occaſions were accuſtomed to juſtify to their neighbours the proceedings of parliament, ſhrunk from the defence of it. It was univerſally reprobated as an unjuſtifiable meaſure, from the practical exerciſe of which every feeling mind muſt revolt with horror.

In the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, where the diſorders chiefly prevailed which this ſevere meaſure was intended to repreſs, and where a military force was ready to execute the orders of the civil power, it produced at firſt ſome little effect *. The writers of ſeditious publications for a few weeks deſiſted from their labours; but no vigorous meaſures being afterwards purſued, their fears were ſoon diſſipated. The aſſembly of that province, far from being intimidated, entered into reſolutions of an oppoſite tendency to thoſe of the Britiſh parliament, and maintained, with reaſon and juſtice on their ſide, that it was the right of every Britiſh ſubject to be tried in that country where his ſuppoſed crime was known to be committed; and that the ſending of perſons into another country for trial was tyrannical and oppreſſive, and derogatory of the rights of freemen. They alſo voted charges againſt their governor for miſconduct, which, with a petition praying for his removal, were tranſmitted to their agent in England, to be laid before the privy council.

In the other colonial aſſemblies the addreſs of parliament for reviving the execution of the ſtatute of 35 Hen. VIII. produced ſevere ſtrictures on the conduct of the Britiſh adminiſtration who could propoſe and carry through ſuch an arbitrary and tyrannical meaſure. Reſolutions were entered into declarative of their rights in caſes of trials for treaſon; and theſe, in ſome of the colonies, were of ſo acrimonious a nature, and ſo diſreſpectful to the Britiſh parliament in the opinion of their governors, that they occaſioned the diſſolution of thoſe aſſemblies who had paſſed them.

So many altercations happened between the American governors and their aſſemblies during the preceding as well as the preſent year, that diſſolutions were now become very frequent: But inſtead of ſerving to ſupport the authority of the mother-country, they were

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* Governor Hutchinſon's Letter, 27th April 1770.

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in reality prejudicial to it, by diffuſing more widely, upon the return of the members to their conſtituents, that diſreſpect to parliament, and that ill-humour, heat, and animoſity, the appearance of which in the aſſemblies had produced their diſſolution.

From the time of the arrival in America of the parliamentary reſolutions of the preſent year, thoſe who promoted the aſſociations met with very little farther obſtruction. Committees were appointed by the people in all the principal towns, whoſe buſineſs it was to examine cargoes upon their arrival from Great Britain, and make reports to their conſtituents how far the aſſociation had been faithfully adhered to, and in what inſtances it had been infringed. Meetings of the aſſociators were regularly held for receiving thoſe reports: And at thoſe meetings votes of cenſure were paſſed upon delinquents, and their names publiſhed in the newſpapers to expoſe them to the hatred of the populace. In ſome inſtances goods imported contrary to the aſſociation were ſtored to prevent them from being ſold; and in others, in order to prevent them from being deſtroyed, they were re-ſhipped to Great Britain.

The effect which ſuch proceedings had on the commerce of the mother-country became very ſoon perceptible. It was found, that the merchandize exported to America in the year 1769 had fallen ſhort of what had been exported to the ſame place in the preceding year by the ſum of ſeven hundred and forty-four thouſand pounds. It was found too, that the revenue ariſing from the duties payable in America was yearly decreaſing[*]: And as the aſſociations which had been entered into were not againſt the uſe of the prohibited articles, provided they were not of the produce or manufacture of

Great

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[*] The ſums applied by parliament out of this revenue in the following years will ſhew the decreaſe:

In 1767 applied by parliament	£110,000
1768 ————————	70,000
1769 ————————	30,000

Great Britain nor imported from thence, it was manifeſt that the demand for ſuch articles would be transferred to foreign countries; and from them they began to be ſmuggled into America, in conſiderable quantities. And thus, in conſequence of the aſſociations, the act of parliament, which was the principal ground of complaint, operated in the colonies as a prohibition on Britiſh manufactures and as a bounty and encouragement, no only to thoſe of America but thoſe too of foreign countries. The merchants trading to America were alſo alarmed, and preſented a petition to parliament, praying for a repeal of the act which had given ſo much offence in that country, ſetting forth the loſs which the mother-country had already ſuſtained in the declenſion of the colonial trade, and ſtating the more ruinous conſequences which they ſtill apprehended if the repeal was longer delayed.

Influenced by ſome or all of theſe conſiderations, lord North, now firſt lord of the treaſury *, as well as chancellor of the exchequer, on the 5th of March moved ſundry reſolutions in the houſe of commons for diſcontinuing all the duties payable in America under the act of parliament of the year 1767, the duty on tea only excepted. The miniſter, in moving theſe reſolutions, did not heſitate to condemn the act by which theſe duties had been impoſed, as a meaſure that was at leaſt impolitic, becauſe the articles on which the duties were payable being chiefly Britiſh manufactures, the exportation of them to the colonies, inſtead of being clogged with duties, ought rather to have been encouraged. He alſo admitted that the duty on tea was reſerved for the ſole purpoſe of ſaving the national honour, and maintaining the authority of parliament: A duty which was too inſignifi-

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* Early in January of this year lord chancellor Camden was diſmiſſed from his office, and many others of the miniſtry reſigned. On the 28th of that month the duke of Grafton reſigned the office of firſt lord of the treaſury, but continued to vote with the miniſtry. The earl of Chatham, from ill health, had reſigned the office of lord privy ſeal in November 1768.

cant to be noticed by the inhabitants of the colonies, unleſs they were at all events determined to quarrel with the mother-country, the whole produce of it being eſtimated at no more than ſixteen thouſand pounds per annum.

The members of oppoſition, on the other hand, contended that the duty on tea ought to be taken off with the reſt; alleging that, unleſs this was done, the diſcontinuing of the other duties would be uſeleſs, ſince the Americans queſtioned not ſo much the amount of the duties as the right to impoſe them. To this the miniſter replied, that the Americans could have no reaſon to complain, becauſe, at the time when the duty of three-pence per pound payable in America was impoſed, other duties upon tea payable in England, and amounting to near one ſhilling per pound, were taken off upon its exportation to America; ſo that the inhabitants of the colonies, inſtead of loſing, actually ſaved by this impoſition nearly nine-pence per pound on all the tea which they uſed. The reſolutions were carried as they had been at firſt moved by the miniſter; and a bill which was introduced in purſuance of them paſſed through both houſes of parliament, and received the royal aſſent on the 22d of April.

Whilſt the miniſter was thus taking meaſures for giving ſatiſfaction to the colonies, an unfortunate incident happened at Boſton in Maſſachuſets Bay, which ſo exaſperated the turbulent and diſcontented inhabitants of that province, as to baniſh from amongſt them all preſent thoughts of a cordial reconciliation with the Britiſh government.

So long as the military force which we have ſeen was ſent to Boſton in the autumn of the year 1768, continued reſpectable in point of number, ſo long the town remained tolerably quiet; but as ſoon as that was weakened by the departure of two out of the four regiments which had been ſtationed there, the former ill-humour of the inhabitants returned. The troops were vilified and lampooned in the newſpapers; the ſoldiers, when met ſingly in the ſtreets, were inſulted; and every method was taken to degrade them in the opinion, and expoſe them to the hatred and contempt of the populace. Daily ſcuffles now happened between the lower claſſes of people in the town, and the ſoldiers when not on duty: And ſo much animoſity had been excited by the virulent publications in the newſpapers, that a deſign is ſaid to have been formed of driving the troops from Boſton by force, in which the people from the country were to have aſſiſted. But if ſuch a deſign was formed, the execution of it became unneceſſary in conſequence of the incident which we are now to relate.

On the evening of the fifth of March, the ſame day on which the Britiſh miniſter moved his reſolutions in the houſe of commons for diſcontinuing the American duties, a quarrel aroſe at Boſton between two or three young men of the town, and as many ſoldiers at or near their barracks. From words they proceeded to blows: And the ſoldiers having vanquiſhed their opponents were ſeen purſuing them through the ſtreets. The alarm to the populace was given by ringing the bells of the churches: And the people of the town aſſembling in great numbers at the cuſtom-houſe, began to crowd round the ſentinel who was poſted there, and not only inſulted him but threatened his life. Captain Preſton, the officer on duty for the day, who had by this time received information of the tumult, proceeded immediately to the main guard; and hearing that the ſentinel placed at the cuſtom-houſe had been threatened, fearing too that the cuſtom-houſe might be in danger, he ſent a party, under the command of a ſerjeant, to protect the one and ſecure the other; and from greater precaution ſoon afterwards followed and took the command of the party himſelf. He endeavoured to prevail upon the people to diſperſe, but in vain. The mob now became more riotous, not only reviling the ſoldiers with abuſive language, but throwing ſtones at them, and whatever elſe came in their way. One of the ſoldiers received a blow from ſomething that was thrown, and levelled his muſket: The officer ſtretching out his arm to prevent the ſoldier from firing, was ſtruck with a club, and the muſket was diſcharged. The attack from the mob became more violent, and the reſt of the ſoldiers following the example of their comrades, diſcharged their pieces ſingly and in a ſcattered manner, by which four of the populace were killed and ſeveral others wounded. They were intimidated, and for a moment fled; but ſoon afterwards collecting, took their ſtation in an adjoining ſtreet. The drums beat to arms, the reſt of the troops were aſſembled, and the whole town was in the utmoſt confuſion;—a town meeting was held, and a deputation was ſent to the governor, requeſting him to remove the troops from the town. The governor called together the council, and the council giving it as their opinion, that the removal of the troops from the town would be for his majeſty's ſervice, the commanding officer promiſed to comply with their advice. Captain Preſton ſurrendered himſelf for trial; and the ſoldiers under his command at the cuſtom-houſe were taken into cuſtody; the mob diſperſed, and the following day the troops were removed to Caſtle William.

Some days afterwards the bodies of thoſe who had been killed in the riot were carried in proceſſion through the town, attended by an immenſe concourſe of people, and interred with much funeral pomp. In this proceſſion flags were expoſed to view with emblematical devices, calculated to inflame the paſſions of the multitude, and inſpire them with deadly revenge; and in the newſpapers the tranſactions of the fifth of March were repreſented as a deliberate murder on the part of the troops, and as an atrocious maſſacre of the unoffending inhabitants.

Whilſt ſuch unjuſtifiable means were uſed to prejudice and poiſon the minds of the people, fortunate it was for the officer and ſoldiers now in cuſtody that their trials were delayed till the month of October. By that time the ferment which had been ſtirred up had in ſome meaſure ſubſided, and the rancorous hatred of the populace againſt the troops was in part abated. When the trials came on, the officer, after a moſt rigorous inquiry into his conduct and the examination of near fifty witneſſes, was moſt honourably acquitted. The four judges who attended the trial were unanimous in their opinions upon the facts which were given in evidence; and the laſt * who delivered his ſentiments concluded his charge in a few emphatical words which did honour to his independence and love of juſtice, and at the ſame time furniſhed the beſt comment on the whole tranſaction. "Happy I am," ſaid he, "that after ſuch ſtrict examination the conduct of the priſoner appears in ſo fair a light; "yet I feel myſelf at the ſame time deeply affected, that this affair "turns out ſo much to the diſgrace of every perſon concerned "againſt him, and ſo much to the ſhame of the town in general." Six of the ſoldiers were alſo acquitted, and two only convicted of manſlaughter.

The intelligence of the act of parliament for diſcontinuing the American duties having reached Boſton whilſt the minds of the inhabitants were yet agitated with the recent recollection of the melancholy events of the fifth of March, made no impreſſion as a ſtep towards reconciliation, but when viewed as a conceſſion forced and extorted from the mother-country, yielded the moſt pleaſing ſatisfaction.

In all the colonies, and in Maſſachuſets Bay as well as the reſt, the embarraſſments and inconveniences ariſing from the aſſociations had by this time become irkſome to the inhabitants: The want of ſome things which could not ſtrictly be called neceſſaries, but which from long uſe and habit were become almoſt indiſpenſable, had been

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* Judge Lyndex.

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Introduction. 1770. ſeverely felt: And the people had become ſo weary of the engagements which they had entered into, that upon receiving the intelligence of even a partial repeal of the act of parliament which had been the cauſe of their complaints, they held the aſſociations to be no longer binding, except for the ſingle article of tea, on which the duty was ſtill payable. In reality, thoſe aſſociations, from the tenor of them, ought to have ſubſiſted in full force until the act for impoſing the duties had been wholly repealed; and attempts were made in all the colonies to induce the people to conſtrue them thus ſtrictly But the inconveniences already experienced were ſo great, that all the influence of the patriots was inſufficient to prevail upon the people to ſubmit to a farther continuance of them. The intercourſe with the mother-country was now therefore again opened for every thing but the importation of tea: And during the remainder of this year and the whole of the next, commerce flowed into the American colonies in a tide unuſually full.

By the act of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament for repealing the American duties, introduced by the Britiſh miniſter, and carried through by his influence, it muſt be confeſſed that he went a great way to meet the wiſhes of the colonial inhabitants: But if entire reconciliation was his object, he did not go far enough. The reſervation of the inſignificant duty on tea was ſufficient to give a fair pretence to the patriotic party * in the colonies to urge, that although the Britiſh parliament had now been twice foiled in its attempts to tax the colonies, it ſtill made pretenſions to the right, and only waited for a more convenient opportunity to accompliſh this favourite object, the duty on tea being reſerved for the ſole purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a precedent for the exerciſe of that right. In both theſe unſucceſsful attempts at taxation the colonial patriots ſaw, or affected to ſee, that the Britiſh parliament had reluctantly given way, and that the people of the colonies,

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* Perhaps by this time it might be called the republican party.

by reſiſtance and clamour, had worked out their own ſalvation; and they now renewed their efforts, by freſh publications, to preſerve and keep alive amongſt the people that jealouſy and diſtruſt of the Britiſh government which they had heretofore been ſo ſucceſsful in exciting, and the continuance of which they conſidered as the beſt ſecurity for the future maintenance of their rights.

But notwithſtanding theſe endeavours to keep up the ball of contention, a general calm now ſucceeded to their late agitations amongſt the bulk of the people in the middle and ſouthern colonies, more eſpecially in the latter. If the Britiſh parliament had not given entire ſatiſfaction, nor removed all ground of apprehenſion, the inhabitants of theſe colonies were at leaſt willing to give it credit for ſo much as had been done, and ſeemed diſpoſed to forget their remaining cauſes of complaint, provided no new attempt ſhould be made to increaſe them.

In the New England provinces a very different diſpoſition of mind prevailed. The act which impoſed the duties formed only an inconſiderable part of their complaints. The reſtrictions upon their commerce, the powers granted to the officers of the navy to check their contraband practices, the eſtabliſhment of an American board of cuſtoms, and the more ſteady execution of the laws of trade, were to them ſubjects of as much real concern as taxation. The total repeal of the act of parliament of the year 1767 would not have given them ſatisfaction; and the partial repeal of it they received not as a favour conferred, but as a forced and ungracious compliance with only a part of what they had a right to demand. Far from meeting the mother-country in reciprocal acts of reconciliation, they now aſſumed a higher tone in conſequence of her conceſſions, and diſcovered an inclination to extend their clamour and demands beyond the limits which they had hitherto ſet to themſelves. The aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay, in an addreſs preſented

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Introduction. 1771. to their governor on the fifth of July in the preſent year, declared "that they knew of no commiſſioners of the cuſtoms, nor any revenue which his majeſty had a right to eſtabliſh in North America;" and in an indignant ſtrain ſubjoined, "that they knew and felt a tribute levied and extorted from thoſe who, if they were allowed to have property, had alſo a right to the abſolute diſpoſal of it." In this province too the ſame diſpoſition to obſtruct the execution of the revenue laws manifeſted itſelf amongſt the populace as on former occaſions. From the time of the removal of the troops in the preceding year, the officers of the cuſtoms were left without protection; and the populace, not ſatisfied with oppoſing them in the execution of their duty, proceeded in various inſtances to much greater lengths, and inflicted upon their perſons the moſt degrading puniſhments.

1772. Nor was this impatience under the controul of the laws of trade confined to Maſſachuſets Bay. It was perceivable in all the New England provinces, and was this year the cauſe of a moſt outrageous inſult offered to government in the deſtruction of the Gaſpee ſchooner, a veſſel in his majeſty's ſervice, ſtationed in Providence river, in the colony of Rhode Iſland, to prevent ſmuggling, and commanded by an officer * vigilant and active in the execution of his duty.

The Gaſpee was boarded at midnight of the tenth of June by two hundred armed men in boats, who, after wounding and abuſing her commander, and forcibly carrying him and his people on ſhore, ſet her on fire.

The cauſes of difference between the mother-country and the province of Maſſachuſets Bay had now ſo long ſubſiſted, and a perverſe ſpirit of oppoſition had ſo intirely poſſeſſed the inhabitants of

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* Lieutenant Duddingſtone of the navy.

the latter, that it would have been no eaſy matter to effect a cordial reconciliation betweem them under any circumſtances, however favourable. Thoſe which did occur were either of the unfavourable kind, or were wreſted by the ſpirit of faction to ſerve the infernal purpoſe of fanning the torch of diſcord; ſo that in every ſucceeding year, the breach, inſtead of cloſing, ſeemed to widen.

A regulation adopted by the Britiſh miniſtry about the beginning of this year, reſpecting the judges and principal officers of the ſuperior court in Maſſachuſets Bay, was ſufficient to throw that province again into a ſtate of uproar and confuſion. The object of this declaration, held forth by the miniſtry who framed it, was, to render the judges, and the other officers to whom it extended, more independent: By the republican party in Maſſachuſets Bay it was ſaid to be a miniſterial plan for rendering them dependent upon the crown. Such oppoſite concluſions do oppoſing parties deduce from the ſame premiſes! The real fact, without gloſs or comment, was this: By the new regulation, liberal ſalaries were aſſigned to the judges, and to the attorney and ſolicitor general, out of the American revenue, by a grant from the crown, in lieu of the ſcanty ſalaries annually voted to them by the aſſembly. Such a regulation in the infancy of the colony, inſtead of exciting murmurs, might perhaps have been received with ſatisfaction and gratitude; but at this time it was worked up into a cauſe of alarm almoſt equal to that which agitated the province in the year 1768, upon receiving the firſt intelligence of the expected arrival of a military force.

It was ſaid, and impreſſed upon the people with much inflammatory declamation, that the Britiſh miniſtry having in vain attempted to dragoon the inhabitants of that province into a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion to the will of parliament by the aid of a military force, were now trying to accompliſh the ſame end in a way not ſo open, but not leſs dangerous—by influencing the judges with grants of ſalaries, and thereby corrupting the ſource of juſtice: And the people were called upon and conjured to withſtand ſo inſidious and deſtructive an innovation.

A town meeting of the inhabitants of Boſton was appointed by the ſelect men, and held on the twenty-fifth of October. At this meeting a petition was prepared and preſented to the governor, ſetting forth the evil tendency of the new regulation, with the alarm which it had occaſioned amongſt the people, and praying him to call an aſſembly. The governor refuſed to comply with the prayer of the petition: And the petitioners having appointed a committee to conſider and propoſe what was fit to be done in that ſeaſon of danger, adjourned to a future day for the purpoſe of receiving their report. The committee, having taken time to deliberate, drew up a report containing a new declaration of rights, more extenſive than any which had been yet framed, and comprehending the rights of the coloniſts as men, citizens, and chriſtians. In this report, the authority of the Britiſh parliament to legiſlate for the colonies, in any reſpect whatſoever, was completely denied. After enumerating the rights of the coloniſts, it ſet forth that theſe had been violated in various inſtances, but more eſpecially by the declaratory act of the year 1766, by which the Britiſh parliament aſſumed to itſelf the power of legiſlating for them without their conſent, and under pretence of that authority had impoſed taxes in the colonies, and appointed new officers to be reſident amongſt them, unknown to their conſtitution, becauſe unauthoriſed by their charter, for the purpoſe of ſuperintending the collection of thoſe taxes, and eſtabliſhing what was called an American revenue. And the Britiſh miniſtry, by framing the new regulation for granting ſalaries to the judges and crown officers out of this odious tribute, were charged with deſigning to complete the ſyſtem of ſlavery which had originated in the houſe of commons, aſſuming a power to grant their money without their conſent. At the adjourned meeting of the inhabitants of Boſton this report was read and agreed to; and ſix hundred copies of it were ordered to be printed and diſperſed through all the towns of the province, accompanied with a circular letter, calling upon the people "not to doze any longer, or ſit ſupinely in indifference, "whilſt the iron hand of oppreſſion was daily tearing the choiceſt "fruits from the fair tree of liberty."

1773. When the aſſembly of this province met in the month of January, the governor probably intending to give them an opportunity, if they were ſo diſpoſed, of doing away the evil impreſſions which might have been made by the unqualified reſolutions of the town meeting at Boſton, took occaſion in his ſpeech to inſiſt on the ſupreme legiſlative authority of the king and parliament. But if he hoped to benefit government by bringing on this diſcuſſion, he was entirely diſappointed. The aſſembly, inſtead of endeavouring to moderate and qualify the doctrines contained in the reſolutions of the town meeting, ſeized the opportunity of the addreſs which was to be preſented, to fix them more firmly and in their utmoſt extent. They openly denied the authority of parliament, not only to impoſe taxes, but to legiſlate for them in any reſpect whatſoever; adding, "that if there had been in any late inſtances a ſubmiſſion to acts of "parliament, it was more from want of conſideration or a reluc-"tance to contend with the parent ſtate, than a conviction of the "ſupreme legiſlative authority of parliament." This addreſs alſo recapitulated a number of new grievances which had not heretofore been complained of: And ſuch was its improper tendency, even in the opinion of the Aſſembly, upon cooler reflection, that ſix months after, in a letter* to the earl of Dartmouth, ſecretary of ſtate for American affairs, they thought it neceſſary to apologize for it, im-

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* Dated 29th June 1773.

Introduction. 1773. puting the blame of their intemperate proceedings to their governor, who had unneceſſarily brought the ſubject of parliamentary authority under their conſideration. In this letter they ſay, "that their "anſwers to the governor's ſpeech were the effect of neceſſity, and "that this neceſſity occaſioned great grief to the two houſes;" and then, in a ſtyle truly characteriſtic of puritanical duplicity, they exclaim, "For, my lord, the people of this province are true and "faithful ſubjects of his majeſty, and think themſelves happy in "their connection with Great Britain."

But this was not the only cauſe of complaint which that aſſembly had againſt their governor *. Their agent at the Britiſh court, Doctor Franklin, a man well known in the philoſophical world, had by ſome means or other got poſſeſſion of certain letters written by their governor in former years to official perſons in England, and about this time tranſmitted them to the aſſembly. The ſubject of this correſpondence was ſo diſpleaſing, that it threw the aſſembly into a violent heat. They ſent a deputation to ſhew the letters to the governor, without truſting them in his hands, and to inquire whether he acknowledged the ſignatures to be his. The ſignatures being owned, they prepared a petition and remonſtrance to be preſented to the king, charging the governor with betraying his truſt, and ſlandering the people under his government, by giving private, partial, and falſe information; declaring him an enemy to the colony, and praying for his removal from his office.

How the letters which gave occaſion to ſo much animoſity in the aſſembly of Maſſachuſets Bay came into the poſſeſſion of their agent,

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* Their preſent governor was Mr. Hutchinſon, a native of Maſſachuſets Bay, a lawyer and a man of learning, who had filled the office of chief-juſtice of the province with general ſatisfaction, and was appointed governor on the reſignation of ſir Francis Bernard in the year 1770. Sir Francis Bernard went to England in the year 1769, to defend himſelf from the charges tranſmitted againſt him by the aſſembly; and although he was honourably acquitted by the privy council, he did not chuſe to return to a province where he was ſo much diſliked.

is not yet certainly known to the public. But either the manner of his obtaining them, or the uſe which he made of them, or both, gave ſo much offence to the Britiſh miniſtry, that he was diſmiſſed from his office of joint deputy poſtmaſter-general for America, under ſuch circumſtances of marked diſapprobation as probably influenced his ſubſequent conduct in the American conteſt.

Whilſt the patriots of Maſſachuſets Bay were thus active in diſcovering new cauſes of complaint, and keeping the province in a ſtate of perpetual clamour and agitation; the ſouthern and middle colonies were peaceably and quietly advancing in population and proſperity, nothing having occurred for ſome years to give the republican party amongſt them (for ſuch a party was by this time formed in all the colonies) any new pretence for quarrelling with the mother-country.

But an act of parliament which paſſed this year was deſtined to revive all the heat of contention, and to bring the diſputes between Great Britain and her colonies to their ultimate criſis. This was an act for impowering the commiſſioners of the treaſury to grant licenſes to the Eaſt India Company to export tea to all places whatſoever free of duty. The affairs of that company had by ſome means or other run into great confuſion: Being unable to ſatisfy their engagements, they applied to parliament for relief, and complained that their diſtreſs was in part owing to the American diſturbances, which had leſſened the demand for their tea; in conſequence of which, they had then lying in their warehouſes, for want of a market, near ſeventeen millions of pounds. One of the regulations adopted for their relief was the act of parliament above-mentioned, for granting them leave, under the ſanction of the treaſury, to export their teas, duty free, wherever they could find a market for them. The miniſter, in procuring this act to be paſſed, had probably two objects in view; one, the relief of the Eaſt India company, and the other, the increaſe of the American revenue, by this new device for introducing the company's tea into the colonies, where it ſtill lay under a prohibition in conſequence of the aſſociations: And it was this laſt object which gave offence in America. The leading men foreſaw that, if the tea was once introduced and landed in America, it would be impoſſible to prevent its ſale and conſumption, and thus the duty would be inevitably levied upon the inhabitants, notwithſtanding all their efforts to prevent it. Reſiſtance to taxation by the Britiſh parliament was become in America a point of national honour which they were determined to maintain. The aſſociations againſt the importation of tea from Great Britain, which in ſome of the colonies had begun to be diſregarded, were now enforced with rigour: And all thoſe means which, we have ſeen, the leading men knew ſo well how to uſe, were again employed by them to excite oppoſition amongſt the people, and ſtir them up to reſiſt with force and violence the landing of ſuch cargoes of tea as might be ſent amongſt them. Nor were their efforts in any of the colonies ineffectual. But the clamour and threatenings were greateſt in the New England provinces; and in them, as on all former occaſions, the firſt forcible reſiſtance to the act of parliament was made.

As ſoon as intelligence was received in the month of November, that three ſhips freighted with tea on account of the Eaſt India company were on their paſſage to Boſton, that place became again the ſeat of tumult, violence, and riot, excited for the purpoſe of frightening the conſigners of the tea ſhips from acting under their appointments. The populace ſurrounded their houſes and demanded their reſignation, which not being complied with, the windows and doors of their houſes were broken, and they themſelves narrowly eſcaped the fury of the mob by flying from the town and taking ſhelter in Caſtle William. The governor in vain iſſued a proclamation commanding the civil magiſtrates to ſuppreſs the riots, and protect the peaceable and well-diſpoſed inhabitants. His proclamation was vilified and contemned, and the ſheriff inſulted for attempting to read it at one of the illegal meetings. Even the council refuſed to adviſe any meaſures for ſecuring the tea upon its arrival, or for protecting the conſignees.

When the two ſhips did arrive, a meeting was held by the inhabitants of Boſton and thoſe of the neighbouring towns, and a determination was made that the ſhips ſhould be ſent back without diſcharging their cargoes. Notice of this determination was ordered to be given to the conſignees of the tea and ſuch other perſons in Boſton as were intereſted in the ſhips; and the meeting was adjourned for the purpoſe of receiving their anſwer. In the mean time difficulties aroſe about ſending away the ſhips: A clearance from the cuſtom-houſe could not be obtained for them, neither could they paſs Caſtle William at the mouth of the harbour, without the governor's permiſſion, which he refuſed to grant. Theſe difficulties being reported to the adjourned meeting, it was immediately diſſolved, with a general cry of, A mob! a mob! And in the evening a number of armed men, diſguiſed as Mohawk Indians, boarded the ſhips and diſcharged their cargoes into the ſea; the whole value of the tea deſtroyed being eſtimated at eighteen thouſand pounds.

1774. The outrages committed by the inhabitants of Boſton had been ſo many, their oppoſition to government ſo daring, and their inſults ſo frequently repeated, that the patience of the Britiſh adminiſtration was now exhauſted. The intelligence of the deſtruction of the tea arriving in England during the ſitting of parliament, and being communicated to both houſes by a meſſage from the king, was immediately referred to a committee, with the papers which accompanied it: And upon receiving their report it was determined, that the town of Boſton, which had always been the foremoſt in reſiſting the authority of parliament, ſhould now be made an example of parliamentary

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liamentary vengeance. Two things were apparently neceſſary to be inſiſted on—ſatisfaction to the Eaſt India company, for the loſs which they had ſuſtained by the deſtruction of the tea; and reparation to the honour of the Britiſh nation, wounded by the inſult. To effectuate theſe purpoſes an act was paſſed for ſhutting up the port of Boſton, and prohibiting the lading or unlading of all goods or merchandize, except ſtores for his majeſty's ſervice, and proviſions and fuel for the uſe of the inhabitants, at any place within its precincts, from and after the firſt of June, until it ſhould appear to his majeſty that peace and obedience to the laws were ſo far reſtored in the town of Boſton, that trade might again be ſafely carried on, and his majeſty's cuſtoms be duly collected; in which caſe his majeſty might by proclamation open the harbour, but not even then until it ſhould appear that ſatisfaction had been made to the Eaſt India company for the deſtruction of their tea, and alſo to thoſe who had ſuffered by the riots at the time of its arrival at Boſton *. This act having been paſſed, a fleet of four ſhips of war was ordered to be got ready to ſail for Boſton, and as a military force might alſo be neceſſary to reduce its diſorderly inhabitants to obedience, general Gage, commander in chief in America, was appointed governor of Maſſachuſets Bay in the room of governor Hutchinſon, who had deſired leave to come to England: And to general Gage, to whom the execution of this act was to be entruſted, full powers were alſo given, by commiſſion under the great ſeal, to grant pardons for treaſon and all other crimes, and to remit all fines and forfeitures to ſuch offenders as ſhould appear to be fit objects of mercy.

To deviſe means for preventing the commiſſion of future enormities was at leaſt as neceſſary as to inflict puniſhment for thoſe which were paſt. From the papers laid upon the tables of the two

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* This bill was introduced into the houſe of commons on the fourteenth of March, and received the royal aſſent on the thirty-firſt.

houſes of parliament, and from a review of the diſorderly proceedings in the colony of Maſſachuſets Bay for many years paſt, the weakneſs of civil government in that province, and its total inſufficiency for ſuppreſſing tumults and preſerving the peace, were very apparent; and it was alſo obvious that this inſufficiency and that weakneſs were in part owing to radical defects in the frame of their government. To provide a remedy for theſe, it was now propoſed to aſſimilate their conſtitution more nearly to that of the royal governments in America, and to their prototype the government of Great Britain. For this purpoſe an act was paſſed to deprive the lower houſe of aſſembly in Maſſachuſets Bay of the privilege of electing the members of the council, and to veſt that privilege in the crown; to authoriſe the king or his ſubſtitute, the governor, to appoint the judges, magiſtrates, and ſheriffs, and to impower the ſheriffs to ſummon and return juries; and for the prevention of factious aſſemblies, to prohibit town meetings from being called by the ſelect men, unleſs with the conſent of the governor.

But as it was now determined to proceed with more vigour than on former occaſions in exacting ſubmiſſion to the authority of the mother-country, and as reſiſtance might ſtill be made, ſo it was neceſſary that thoſe who were to be employed in enforcing obedience, ſhould meet with due protection, and be well aſſured of a fair trial, in caſe they ſhould be queſtioned for any thing neceſſarily done in the execution of their duty. The caſe of captain Preſton was remembered, with the clamour then raiſed, and the unjuſtifiable methods taken to prejudice the people, which might have proved fatal to him had not his trial been delayed. To obviate ſuch an evil in future, a third act of parliament was paſſed for the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice in Maſſachuſets Bay, impowering the governor, with the advice of the council, where any perſon acting in his duty as an officer of revenue, or as a magiſtrate, for the ſuppreſſion of riots, or in ſupport of the laws of revenue, or where any perſon acting under the direction of the magiſtrate for any of thoſe purpoſes, ſhould be charged with the crime of murder, or with any other capital offence committed whilſt he was ſo acting, to ſend the perſon ſo charged into any other colony, or to Great Britain, to be tried, if it ſhould appear to the governor and council that an impartial trial could not be had within the province of Maſſachuſets Bay.

During the ſitting of parliament letters were received from all the thirteen colonies, now the United States of America, by which it appeared that in all of them the landing of the tea had been reſiſted. In ſome it had been ſent back in the ſame ſhips which brought it; in others, ſmall parcels of it had been deſtroyed; and in others, where they had conſented at leaſt to the unloading of the ſhips, it was only upon condition that the tea ſhould be ſtored under lock and key, and an engagement that it ſhould not be offered for ſale. Thus it appeared that the inhabitants of all the colonies were involved, although in a leſs outrageous degree than thoſe of the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, in the guilt of having oppoſed the authority of the mother-country.

In this ſtate of theſe provinces on the ſea-coaſt, it was thought neceſſary to give ſatisfaction to the inhabitants of the interior province of Canada, by paſſing an act for the ſettlement of their government. The objects of this act were, to ſecure to the inhabitants of that province the free exerciſe of their religion; and to the Roman Catholic clergy their rights, agreeably to the articles of capitulation at the time of the ſurrender of the province; to reſtore their ancient laws in civil caſes without a trial by jury, as being more acceptable to the French Canadians than the Engliſh laws with the trial by jury; and to eſtabliſh a council, holding their commiſſions from and at the pleaſure of the king, who were to exerciſe all the powers of legiſlation, that of impoſing taxes only excepted. Such a council, compoſed principally

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of the Canadian nobleſſe, it was ſuppoſed would be more agreeable to the bulk of the people than a houſe of repreſentatives. And the laſt object of the act was to extend the limits of the province, which, reaching far to the ſouthward behind the other colonies, might be made to ſerve as a check upon them if neceſſary.

The firſt of theſe acts, the Boſton port bill, paſſed through the two houſes of parliament without much difficulty, as the conduct of the people of Boſton, in deſtroying the tea, was generally diſapproved of in England, and the cauſe of their loſing many friends. The bill was introduced into the houſe of commons on the fourteenth of March, and received the royal aſſent on the thirty-firſt of the ſame month. But the other three acts, although finally paſſed by a great majority, were not carried through their intermediate ſtages without much oppoſition *. In every thing that reſpected America, the members of oppoſition, and particularly the Rockingham party, hung upon the miniſter, and if they did not prevent, certainly impeded his meaſures and leſſened their effect; and, by their ill-timed prophetic forebodings, ſpirited up the Americans to act what they foretold.

Whilſt the Britiſh parliament were thus paſſing acts for maintaining the authority of the mother-country over the colonies, and for puniſhing paſt and preventing future tranſgreſſions againſt it in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay; the aſſembly of that province, when they met in the beginning of the year, far from taking any ſteps for averting puniſhment, on the contrary, employed themſelves in purſuing ſuch meaſures as had a tendency to provoke ſtill more the Britiſh miniſtry and parliament. The clamour raiſed in Maſſachuſets Bay in the year 1772, in conſequence of the regulation for aſſigning ſalaries to the judges by grants from the crown, has been already noticed; and

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* They received the king's aſſent on the twentieth of May.

this year it was revived by the aſſembly, who ſent a meſſage to the judges, requiring them to declare whether they meant to receive their ſalaries from the aſſembly as uſual, or from the crown, by virtue of the new grants. All the judges, except the chief-juſtice, conſented to receive their ſalaries as uſual from the aſſembly. He alone declared his reſolution to receive his ſalary from the crown, and him the aſſembly reſolved to impeach for this ſuppoſed unconſtitutional proceeding. Charges drawn up in the form of an impeachment were accordingly voted, and carried to the governor and council, whom the aſſembly judged to be as competent to the trial of an impeachment in Maſſachuſets Bay, as the houſe of lords is in Great Britain. The impeachment was however ſent back with a meſſage from the governor, importing, that the governor and council had no authority to try impeachments. The aſſembly now changed the mode of their accuſation, converting the charges contained in the impeachment into a petition of complaint to be preſented to the governor, which concluded with a prayer for the removal of the chief-juſtice. The governor refuſed to comply with the prayer of the petition; and finding the aſſembly determined to proſecute their complaint againſt the chief-juſtice in ſome form or other, he at laſt diſſolved them about the end of March.

But the attention of the people of that province was ſoon to be engroſſed by a ſubject of higher importance, than a diſpute with their governor or chief-juſtice; and the inhabitants of Boſton were at laſt to feel the weight of the diſpleaſure of that power which they had ſo long provoked with impunity. In the month of May intelligence arrived, that the act for ſhutting up the port of Boſton had been paſſed by the Britiſh parliament; and this intelligence, together with a copy of the act, was immediately publiſhed upon a paper with a black border, ſymbolical of mourning, and hawked about the ſtreets, as a barbarous, cruel, bloody, and inhuman murder.

der. The former riotous preceedings of the town of Boſton had been ſo often overlooked, that ſuch an act of ſeverity as the Boſton port bill, was totally unexpected; and upon the firſt publication of the intelligence, nothing was to be heard but frantic expreſſions of rage and reſentment againſt the tyranny and inhumanity of the Britiſh miniſtry and parliament; and vengeance was loudly called for and threatened. But unfortunately for the inhabitants of Boſton, the operation of this act of parliament, as a puniſhment, unlike, in this reſpect, thoſe which had preceded it, could not in their preſent circumſtances be either reſiſted or eluded. It was doubtful whether the other ſea-port towns in the province might not take advantage of the preſent moment, to raiſe their own commerce upon the ruins of that of Boſton; and it was alſo uncertain whether the other colonies would cordially intereſt themſelves in their behalf. Such conſiderations had undoubtedly an influence, as ſoon as they began coolly to reflect upon their ſituation; and to the firſt efferveſcence of reſentment, a ſtate of mind ſeems to have ſucceeded, bordering upon deſpondence. A town meeting was held, at which a vote was paſſed, addreſſed to the inhabitants of the other colonies, importing, that if they would come into a joint reſolution to give up all intercourſe with the mother-country in the way of trade, until the Boſton port bill ſhould be repealed, it would prove the ſalvation of America and her liberties; but if they did not, there was too much reaſon to fear that fraud, power, and the moſt odious oppreſſion, would riſe triumphant over right, juſtice, ſocial happineſs, and freedom. Copies of this vote were ordered to be ſent to all the other colonies, and the meeting was diſſolved, every one being buſied in arranging his affairs for the firſt of June, the day on which the port of Boſton was to be deprived of its commerce.

In this ſtate of doubt and anxiety the people of Boſton did not long remain without receiving ſome conſolation. The inhabitants of the neigh-

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neighbouring towns, inſtead of attempting to profit by their diſtreſs, offered them the uſe of their wharfs and warehouſes for the purpoſe of carrying on their trade: And from the other colonies they ſoon received the moſt flattering teſtimonies of condolence and commiſeration.

In all the colonies the landing of tea had been reſiſted, and therefore they all ſhared in the criminality for which the town of Boſton was about to ſuffer; and on ſuch an occaſion to have deſerted their brethren in diſtreſs would have been unmanly and ungenerous. The aſſembly of Virginia, which was ſitting at this time, ſet the example of making the ſufferings of the inhabitants of Boſton a common cauſe of complaint in all the colonies. In that aſſembly a reſolution was paſſed for appointing the firſt of June, the day on which the Boſton port bill was to take effect, to be ſet apart as a day of faſting, prayer, and humiliation, "to implore the divine "interpoſition, to avert the heavy calamity which threatened de"ſtruction to their civil rights with the evils of a civil war; and "to give one heart and one mind to the people firmly to oppoſe "every injury to the American rights." This reſolution, the general tendency of which to excite oppoſition to the mother-country, was ſufficiently obvious, and which at the ſame time encroached on the royal prerogative by enjoining a faſt, occaſioned the diſſolution of the aſſembly: But, before the members ſeparated, a private meeting was held, at which a declaration was drawn up and ſubſcribed by a majority of the aſſembly, ſetting forth that the puniſhment about to be inflicted on the inhabitants of Boſton, in order to compel them to ſubmit to the payment of unconſtitutional taxes, was in truth an attack upon all the colonies, and would ultimately prove deſtructive to the rights and liberties of all, unleſs the united wiſdom of the whole was applied to prevent it. They therefore recommended to the committee of correſpondence to propoſe to the committees of the other colonies, that an annual congreſs ſhould be held for all the colonies, to deliberate on ſuch general meaſures as the united intereſts of America might from time to time require. And they concluded with an intimation, that a regard for their fellow-ſubjects, the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, prevented them from going further at that time.

The example ſet by the aſſembly of Virginia was followed in the other colonies. Provincial, county, or town meetings were everywhere held, at which reſolutions of a ſimilar tendency were paſſed: And the firſt day of June was very generally obſerved in America as a day of faſting, humiliation, and prayer.

13th May. General Gage arrived at Boſton not many days after the intelligence was received of the act for ſhutting up its harbour, and whilſt the inhabitants, aſſembled at a town meeting, were yet deliberating on the melancholy proſpect before them. Notwithſtanding this inauſpicious entry into his government, he was received with the uſual honours. He had been many years commander in chief in America, was perſonally known at Boſton, and univerſally reſpected for his amiable character and manners. But the animoſity which had been kindled in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay againſt the Britiſh government had riſen to too great a height to be checked by any perſonal conſiderations for a governor, however amiable or reſpectable. The aſſembly met according to cuſtom, ſoon after his arrival; and in the ſpeech delivered at the opening of the ſeſſion, he gave them notice that they were to remove to Salem on the firſt of June, which from that time was to be conſidered as the ſeat of government. This information was far from being pleaſing to the aſſembly, and they preſented a petition to the governor, intreating him to appoint a day of general faſting and prayer. The governor declined complying with the petition, and ſoon afterwards adjourned the ſeſſion to the ſeventh of June, then to meet at Salem.

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In the interval of this adjournment, letters were received from moſt of the other colonies; and it was perceived that the cauſe of the inhabitants of Boſton was every-where warmly eſpouſed. The leading men in Maſſachuſets Bay, cheered by this intelligence, laid aſide their deſpondency, and reſolved to act with more vigour than ever in reſiſting the claims of the mother-country. When the aſſembly met at Salem, a reſolution was paſſed declaring the expediency of a general congreſs to be held for all the colonies, and ſetting forth at large their reaſons for recommending ſuch a meaſure. Five of their own members were appointed to repreſent them, all of them zealouſly attached to the American cauſe, and violently hoſtile to the pretenſions of the Britiſh parliament; and a ſum of money was voted to defray their expences. They were ſenſible that after this proceeding their diſſolution would ſoon follow, and they haſtened to prepare another reſolution, declarative of their ſentiments on the preſent ſtate of affairs, and recommending to their conſtituents ſuch meaſures as they wiſhed them to purſue. In this reſolution they lamented their preſent ſituation, which obliged them to ſtruggle againſt the heavy hand of power; they complained that their petitions to the king and parliament had been diſregarded; they ſet forth that it was apparently the deſign of the Britiſh government to deſtroy the free conſtitutions of the American colonies, and to erect in their ſtead the ſyſtems of tyranny and arbitrary ſway, incompatible with liberty, and totally ſubverſive of their conſtitutional rights: They called upon the people of the province to obſtruct as far as was in their power the execution of ſuch evil deſigns; and for this purpoſe recommended to them to give up as much as poſſible every kind of intercourſe with the mother-country, until their grievances ſhould be completely redreſſed. This declaratory reſolution had ſcarcely been paſſed, when the governor, receiving information of their proceedings, put an end to the ſeſſion by

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diſſolving the aſſembly; which was the laſt that was held under the charter of Maſſachuſets Bay.

An attempt was now made by ſome inhabitants of Boſton who were friendly to government to procure reſolutions to be paſſed at one of their town meetings for paying to the Eaſt India company the value of their tea, and for diſſolving the committee of correſpondence; but in this attempt they were defeated by a very great majority.

Rough draughts of the two bills already mentioned for altering the conſtitution, and for the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice in Maſſachuſets Bay, having arrived ſoon afterwards, the clamours of the leading men in all the colonies became louder and more vehement than ever: The calm ſtill voice of the friends of government who remained in any of them was no longer to be heard amidſt the noiſe and uproar of tumultuous fervour: And the cauſe of the inhabitants of Boſton grew more popular, contributions being raiſed for their relief in ſeveral of the colonies.

If thoſe who directed the councils of the people in Maſſachuſets Bay were before reſolved on reſiſtance and oppoſition, they now determined to carry that reſolution to the utmoſt extremity. As a previous ſtep, the recommendation of the aſſembly was immediately acted upon, and an aſſociation was ſet on foot, whereby the ſubſcribers bound themſelves, under the moſt ſolemn obligation, to break off all commercial intercourſe with Great Britain from the laſt day of the month of Auguſt, until the Boſton port bill and the other obnoxious acts of parliament ſhould be repealed, and the colony reſtored to the exerciſe of its chartered rights; and to renounce all dealings with thoſe who ſhould refuſe to enter into this agreement, or who, engaging, ſhould afterwards break through it; and the whole was ſanctioned by an agreement that the names of delinquents ſhould be publiſhed in the newſpapers as enemies to their country, a penalty, Introduction. 1774. in the preſent lawleſs and perturbed ſtate of the province, of the moſt dangerous tendency. In order to recommend the aſſociation more powerfully to the attention of the populace, it was handed to them under the antiquated but impreſſive title of a ſolemn league and covenant, a term of the laſt century affixed to an engagement entered into by the Puritans, which was ſtill held in great veneration by their deſcendants in Maſſachuſets Bay. To counteract this aſſociation, 29th June. a proclamation was iſſued by the governor, in which it was ſtyled an illegal and traiterous combination, contrary to the allegiance due to the king and ſubverſive of the authority of parliament; and the people were cautioned againſt giving any countenance to it, under the penalties annexed to ſuch heinous offences. But the proclamation was diſregarded, and the ſolemn league and covenant was generally ſubſcribed throughout New England.

General Gage, ſoon after he took poſſeſſion of his government, foreſeeing the ſtorm which was gathering, ordered ſome regiments of foot, with a detachment of artillery, to be ſent to Boſton: And theſe, upon their arrival, were encamped upon the common lying between the town and the narrow neck of land called Boſton Neck, which joins it with the continent. When troops were formerly ſtationed at Boſton, deſertion was much encouraged by the inhabitants; and the ſame practice being again revived, a guard was placed upon Boſton Neck to prevent it. This was magnified into an attempt to cut off the communication between the town and the country, and to compel the inhabitants of the former, by famine, to ſubmit to ſuch terms as might be impoſed upon them; and a falſe report to this effect being ſpread about in the country, the inhabitants July. of the county of Worceſter aſſembled in great numbers, and ſent meſſengers to inquire into the truth of the report. Theſe were charged to give an aſſurance to the people of Boſton that ſeveral thouſand armed men were ready to come to their aſſiſtance, ſhould it be neceſſary; but at the ſame time to acquaint them, that if they ſhould loſe their fortitude, ſo far as to ſurrender their liberties, the people of the country would not hold themſelves bound by their ſubmiſſion.

August.

About this time an authentic copy of the act of parliament for altering the conſtitution, and regulating the government of Maſſachuſets Bay, arrived at Boſton, together with commiſſions from the king to thoſe who were to conſtitute the new council, in the room of that elected by the aſſembly. This council was intended to conſiſt of thirty-ſix members, but twenty-four only accepted their commiſſions; and theſe having qualified, writs were iſſued by the governor, with their advice, for the meeting of a new aſſembly in the beginning of October. But the rage of the populace now again burſt forth, and was directed againſt thoſe who had accepted ſeats in the new council; and the greateſt number of them, to ſave their perſons from being torn to pieces by the mob, and their property from being deſtroyed, were obliged to reſign their appointments; a few only who reſided in Boſton, and were protected by the troops, retained their ſituations. When the ſuperior court ſat for the adminiſtration of juſtice, the juries refuſed to be ſworn, and the inferior officers of the court, frightened by the threats which were denounced againſt them, declined acting under the new regulations; and ſo many obſtructions were met with in every department, that from this time civil government in Maſſachuſets Bay was entirely diſſolved. Boſton was the only place of ſecurity in the province; and that in conſequence of the military force encamped in its neighbourhood. By means of this force alone was protection afforded to ſuch as differed in ſentiment from the popular party. Whoſoever rendered himſelf obnoxious, by diſcovering his attachment to the mother-country, and a wiſh to ſubmit to her laws, was inſulted by the populace; and many were hunted from their dwellings in the country, and obliged to take refuge in Boſton. Arms were provided by thoſe who were without them: Ammunition and warlike ſtores began to be collected: And the young men were employed in training themſelves to military diſcipline.

Under ſuch an appearance of hoſtile intention, and ſuch preparations going forward, general Gage could no longer refrain from providing for the ſecurity of the troops which he commanded, by fortifying Boſton Neck; and with the like intent, he removed to Boſton the powder and other military ſtores depoſited in the magazines at Charleſtown, Cambridge, and the Medford powder-houſe, leſt the people ſhould have been ſtirred up to ſeize on them. Theſe proceedings of the governor, which, in his ſituation, were apparently neceſſary, gave ſo much offence, and created ſo great an alarm, that the people, whoſe minds had been worked up to a degree of phrenzy by the machinations of the violent party amongſt them, aſſembled again from all quarters, and were with difficulty reſtrained from marching to Boſton and attacking the troops. About the ſame time a falſe report was ſpread in Connecticut, that an attack was begun upon the inhabitants of Boſton by the ſhips in the harbour and the troops from the common, when ſeveral thouſands of the militia of that province aſſembled in arms, and marched a conſiderable diſtance to the ſuppoſed relief of their brethren at Boſton, before they were undeceived, and diſcovered that the report was falſe. Theſe rumours were probably circulated by the contrivance of the leading men, to try the temper of the people. But their affairs were not yet ripe for open hoſtilities; and in this ſtate of tumult and commotion it was thought fit to appoint a meeting of delegates from all the towns in the county of Suffolk, of which Boſton is the capital, to adviſe ſuch a plan of conduct to be obſerved by the people as the preſent poſture of affairs might require.

This meeting was accordingly held, and the complection of its deliberations was ſuch as no longer left it doubtful to what lengths the leading men of this province were determined to go, provided they met with ſupport from the other colonies, and that the diſpute between the mother-country and the colonies was faſt approaching to that criſis, when an appeal muſt be made to the ſword. In the reſolutions paſſed on this occaſion, they refuſed all ſubmiſſion to the late acts of parliament, and engaged to indemnify ſuch as ſhould be proſecuted for diſobedience to them. They accuſed thoſe who had accepted ſeats in the new council, of violating the duty which they owed to their country, and threatened them with being treated as public enemies, unleſs they reſigned their appointment. They recommended the holding of a provincial congreſs. They exhorted the people to perfect themſelves in the uſe of arms, and for that purpoſe to aſſemble once every week. They warned them to be upon their guard againſt the deſigns of their enemies, who had determined to ſeize upon ſome of thoſe amongſt them, who had deſerved well of their country by a ſtrenuous oppoſition to the arbitrary meaſures of the Britiſh miniſtry; and if ſuch an attempt ſhould be made, they were exhorted to oppoſe it; and ſhould their oppoſition be ineffectual, they were directed to retaliate, by ſeizing upon every Britiſh officer they could find: And laſtly, they recommended to the receivers of the public revenue to keep it in their own hands until the conſtitution of the province was reſtored, or until it ſhould be otherwiſe diſpoſed of by a provincial convention. They alſo preſented a remonſtrance to the governor, complaining of the fortifications carrying on at Boſton Neck, and of the ſeizure of the public magazines; and they tell him, that although they have no inclination to commence hoſtilities againſt his majeſty's troops, they are yet determined never to ſubmit to the late acts of parliament.

September 9.

This was the moſt open aſſumption of power on the part of the people, and the moſt direct and daring interference with the executive authority, that had yet taken place in any of the colonies.

September.

But the attention of all America was now directed to the general congreſs, which had met at Philadelphia on the fifth of this month. During the courſe of the ſummer, preparatory meaſures had been taken in all the colonies, Georgia excepted, for holding this grand aſſembly of colonial repreſentation; and Philadelphia, from its centrical ſituation, was fixed upon for the place of meeting. In thoſe colonies in which their aſſemblies met, delegates to the congreſs were appointed by them, and reſolutions were paſſed for their government and direction; and in the others the people elected repreſentatives, as if it had been for an aſſembly; and theſe repreſentatives meeting together, choſe delegates to congreſs, and gave them inſtructions.

In thoſe inſtructions there was a conſiderable variety, according to the different tempers of the leading men in the delegated aſſemblies. From ſome of the colonies the inſtructions were moderate, and from others more violent; but they all agreed in condemning the Boſton port bill, and the other acts of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament relating to Maſſachuſets Bay, and in denying the right of the Britiſh parliament to tax the colonies. But the moſt material of all their inſtructions, and what in a great meaſure ſuperſeded the uſe of all others, was a power given to their delegates to agree to whatever meaſures ſhould meet with the concurrence of a majority of the congreſs.

This congreſs conſiſted of fifty-one delegates, repreſenting twelve of the colonies lying along the ſhore of the Atlantic, from New Hampſhire to South Carolina incluſive; the greateſt number of delegates for any one colony being ſeven, and the ſmalleſt two. But this diſparity in the number of delegates did not affect the votes, as it was agreed that each colony ſhould have but one vote, whatever was the number of its delegates. The congreſs ſat with their doors locked; no one was permitted to be preſent at their deliberations, and all their proceedings, except thoſe which they thought fit to publiſh, were kept profoundly ſecret. Aſſembled in the cauſe of freedom, they nevertheleſs thought fit to obſerve a form practiſed only in the moſt deſpotic governments. Their proceedings being wrapped up in myſtery, and all the intermediate ſteps, leading to a concluſion, being hid from the public eye, their decrees, when promulgated, were received like the oracles of ancient times, as the dictates of profound wiſdom.

The only proceedings which they publiſhed, were, a declaration on the ſtate of affairs in Maſſachuſets Bay; a letter to general Gage, a declaration of rights and grievances, accompanied with an aſſociation; a petition to the king; an addreſs to the people of Great Britain; another to the inhabitants of the colonies; and a third to the people of Canada; all of them maſterly compoſitions, and well adapted to the purpoſes for which they were intended.

In their declaratory reſolutions on the ſtate of affairs in Maſſachuſets Bay, which was the firſt of their public acts, and bore date the ſeventeenth of September, they approved of the plan of conduct which had been hitherto purſued by the people of that province, and of the reſolutions paſſed, and meaſures propoſed, by the delegates of the towns in the county of Suffolk, and adviſed a perſeverance in the ſame line of conduct; and for the relief of the inhabitans of Boſton, whoſe diſtreſſes were every day increaſing, they recommended that contributions ſhould be raiſed for them in all the other colonies, to continue ſo long as their occaſions might require; and if at laſt it ſhould be found neceſſary to remove the Boſtonians into the country, that their loſſes in that caſe ſhould be compenſated at the charge of all the colonies.

With this firſt public act of the congreſs, which was conſidered as deciſive of the opinions that they held, and the meaſures they

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meant to purſue, the friends of government (for ſuch a party, and a very conſiderable one, there was in all the colonies), and even ſome of the more moderate of the patriotic party, were much chagrined and diſappointed. They had hoped that the congreſs would have adopted only pacific means for obtaining a redreſs of grievances; but in the unqualified approbation given to the very irregular conduct of the people of Maſſachuſets Bay, and particularly to the reſolutions of the delegates of the county of Suffolk, they thought that they ſaw an evident determination in the congreſs to oppoſe the authority of the mother-country by force and arms. And their apprehenſions were rather increaſed than allayed by the letter from the congreſs to general Gage, in which they declared it to be the fixed and unalterable reſolution of all the colonies to unite for the preſervation of their common rights, in oppoſition to the late acts of parliament, and in ſupport of their brethren of Maſſachuſets Bay.

The declaration of rights contained a ſummary of all the rights appertaining to Britiſh ſubjects, to the free exerciſe of which they maintained that they were entitled by the immutable laws of nature, by the Britiſh conſtitution, and by their ſeveral charters. All former diſtinctions between legiſlation and taxation, between external and internal taxes, were now laid aſide. They claimed, in behalf of the colonies, the ſole and excluſive power of legiſlating for themſelves in all caſes whatſoever: But from the mere neceſſity of the caſe, were willing to ſubmit to ſuch acts of parliament as were *bonâ fide* intended to regulate their foreign commerce, excluding however every idea of taxation, internal or external, for raiſing a revenue from the people of the colonies without their conſent. Their grievances, they ſaid, were occaſioned by eleven acts of parliament paſſed in the preſent reign, moſt of which have been already mentioned in the courſe of this hiſtory; and in the enumerated liſt they included the three acts of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, relating to the colony of

Maſſachuſets Bay, and the act for extending the limits of Canada. The repeal of all theſe acts, they inſiſted, was neceſſary to give them ſatisfaction; and as the moſt effectual meaſure which they could deviſe, for obliging the mother-country to do them juſtice in theſe reſpects, they recommended an aſſociation to be entered into by the inhabitants of the colonies for diſcontinuing all importations from Great Britain, Ireland, and the Britiſh iſlands in the Weſt Indies, after the firſt of December following, and all exportation from the colonies to thoſe countries, after the tenth of September 1775, and for giving up the uſe of tea entirely, from the firſt of March in that year, until the acts of parliament which conſtituted their grievances ſhould be repealed. A formal inſtrument of writing to this effect, and containing various other regulations for enforcing the execution of it, having been prepared, was immediately ſubſcribed by all the members of congreſs; and printed copies of it were forthwith diſtributed through all the colonies for the ſubſcription of the inhabitants.

In their petition to the king, they ſet forth all the grievances recited in the aſſociation, and to theſe added many more of leſs importance; but at the ſame time gave an aſſurance that if they were relieved from the firſt, the harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, with the uſual intercourſes, would be immediately reſtored, and in that caſe they would truſt in the magnanimity and juſtice of his majeſty and the parliament to grant redreſs in the reſt.

The object of their addreſs to the people of Great Britain was to render the American cauſe in that country more popular than of late it had been; and to apologize for the ſuſpenſion of commerce, a meaſure which, they inſiſted, neceſſity alone, and a regard to ſelf-preſervation, obliged them to adopt.

Their addreſs to the inhabitants of the colonies was deſigned to explain to them in what manner they were all intereſted in the fate of the people of Boſton, and to urge them to a compliance with thoſe meaſures which the congreſs had recommended, until a general redreſs of grievances ſhould be obtained.

But the ableſt of their compoſitions, although the moſt malignant in its intention, was their addreſs to the people of Canada; the object of which was to render the inhabitants of that province diſcontented and uneaſy under their new form of government, to ſow the ſeeds of diſcord between them and the mother-country, and to induce them to join with the other colonies in the general confederacy.

Such were the public proceedings of this congreſs, which, after ſitting fifty-two days, diſſolved itſelf on the twenty-ſixth of October, having firſt recommended that another ſhould be held in the month of May: And its decrees, although publiſhed only in the ſtyle of recommendations, commanded greater reſpect, and were more implicitly obeyed in all the colonies, than the laws of their own governments.

But we muſt now return to the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, in whoſe fate, in conſequence of the determination of congreſs, all the colonies felt themſelves deeply intereſted, and upon the tranſactions in which depended more immediately the doubtful iſſue of peace or war. As the winter ſeaſon approached, general Gage thought it neceſſary that barracks ſhould be erected, as well for the greater eaſe of the inhabitants of Boſton, as for the better accommodation of the troops: But in this neceſſary arrangement he met with many obſtructions, not only from the general diſinclination of the inhabitants to afford any aſſiſtance to government, but alſo from the particular interpoſition of the ſelect men, by whoſe influence and perſuaſion the artificers who had been employed were induced to deſiſt from carrying on the work. Nor were the barracks finiſhed till other artificers were procured from New Hampſhire and New York, the two colonies which had hitherto conducted themſelves with the greateſt moderation. Throughout the whole province of Maſſachuſets Bay every poſſible impediment was thrown in the way of government, and every method taken to prevent the troops from being ſupplied with ſuch things as were neceſſary for their accommodation: The people had even proceeded ſo far as to burn a quantity of ſtraw, and ſink a number of boats loaded with bricks coming to Boſton for their uſe. But notwithſtanding theſe provocations no offenſive meaſures were undertaken, the general having determined to act with the utmoſt caution and circumſpection; ſo that, if the ſword muſt at laſt be unſheathed, it might appear to be owing to no fault in him. That this muſt ſoon happen there was now indeed the greateſt probability, as the violence of the people was daily increaſing and breaking out into the moſt criminal exceſſes againſt ſuch as were ſuppoſed to be unfriendly to the American cauſe. In conſequence of this violence, the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms and all the officers of government had been obliged to quit Salem, and fly to Boſton for protection; which, inſtead of being, as formerly, the ſeat of tumult and diſorder, was now the only place of ſafety within the province of Maſſachuſets Bay.

It may be remembered that ſoon after the new council had qualified under the act for regulating the government of Maſſachuſets Bay, writs were iſſued by the governor for the election of a new aſſembly to ſit in the beginning of October; but the violence of the patriotic party in the province had increaſed to ſuch a degree, and ſo many of the new council, either from threats or from violence actually committed, had been obliged to reſign their appointments, that a ſufficient number did not remain to meet the aſſembly as a ſeparate houſe. Under ſuch circumſtances the governor thought fit by proclamation to countermand the execution of the writs of election. But this proclamation was held by the leading men of the province to be illegal, and the elections were made in purſuance of the writs. The repreſentatives who were choſen met at Salem at the time appointed for the return of the writs, and having waited a day for the governor without his appearing, they voted themſelves into a provincial congreſs, and choſe Mr. Hancock for their preſident. This was the ſame perſon, the ſeizure of whoſe ſloop for contraband practices had occaſioned an inſurrection at Boſton in the year 1768, and the conſequences of which inſurrection are ſuppoſed by many to have precipitated the diſpute between the mother-country and her colonies towards its preſent alarming criſis. So dangerous is it to provoke a popular character in a republican government!

This ſelf-conſtituted congreſs having choſen their preſident, adjourned themſelves to Concord, a town about twenty miles from Boſton. One of their earlieſt proceedings was a remonſtrance which they preſented to the governor on the ſubject of the fortifications at Boſton Neck, and on the alarm occaſioned in the province by the military force collecting at Boſton, which they alleged was now daily increaſing by the arrival of troops from all parts of the continent in ſuch numbers as tended to endanger the lives, liberties, and property, not only of the people of Boſton but of the province in general. To this remonſtrance the governor, however averſe to holding any correſpondence with an illegal aſſembly, thought it neceſſary, in the preſent ſtate of the province, to give an anſwer: And in his anſwer he indignantly told the provincial congreſs that the lives, liberties, and property of none but avowed enemies could be in danger from Britiſh ſoldiers, who, notwithſtanding the enmity which had been ſhewn to them in withholding from them every thing neceſſary for their preſervation, had not diſcovered that reſentment which might have been expected from ſuch hoſtile treatment. He put them in mind that, whilſt they were complaining of alterations made in their charter, they were themſelves ſubverting it by their preſent illegal meeting; and he admoniſhed them to deſiſt from ſuch unconſtitutional proceedings.

But notwithſtanding theſe admonitions from the governor, the provincial congreſs continued to ſit, and the ſituation of the town of Boſton, poſſeſſed as it was by the king's troops, engaged much of their attention. The neck of land which joins it with the continent being now fortified, the people of the town might be kept as hoſtages for the behaviour of the inhabitants of the country; and whilſt the inhabitants remained in the town, whom, diſtreſſed as they were, it would have been cruel to prevent from obtaining ſuch things from the country as they ſtood in need of, it was not poſſible entirely to withhold ſupplies from the troops, an object which the provincial congreſs had much at heart. Boſton too was capable of being made ſtill ſtronger; and a garriſon placed in it, if things were brought to extremity, would prove a great annoyance to the reſt of the province. Theſe conſiderations gave them great uneaſineſs; but it was difficult to deviſe a proper remedy for the evils which they apprehended. Frequent expreſſes paſſed between them and the general congreſs which was then ſitting, and various plans and ſchemes were propoſed; but all of them were liable to ſuch inſurmountable objections, that, after much time ſpent upon this ſubject, nothing was finally determined upon. In other matters they neither felt any ſcruples, nor met with any difficulties: They paſſed reſolutions, under the ſtyle of recommendations, for regulating and exerciſing the militia, for collecting and diſpoſing of the public revenue, and for providing arms and military ſtores.

Theſe were ſuch daring aſſumptions of the powers of government, under the maſk of advice, that the governor thought it neceſſary to iſſue a proclamation warning the inhabitants of the province againſt ſuffering themſelves to be enſnared by the provincial congreſs, or led by their influence to incur the penalties of ſedition, treaſon, and rebellion; and ſtrictly prohibiting all his majeſty's liege ſubjects from paying any obedience to the recommendations or reſolves 10th Nov.

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ſolves of ſuch an unlawful aſſembly. But the governor's proclamation, as on former occaſions, was treated with contempt; and the requiſitions of the provincial congreſs were obeyed as laws. That aſſembly appointed another congreſs to be held in the month of February, and diſſolved itſelf towards the end of November.

Previous to the meeting of the general congreſs no hoſtile preparations had been made either in the middle or ſouthern colonies: But after the breaking up of the congreſs, and upon the return of its members to their reſpective colonies, the ſame ſpirit which actuated the people of the New England colonies ſeems to have pervaded the whole continent. The militia officers aſſembled their companies more frequently than had been cuſtomary, and were aſſiduous in training them. Arms were provided by thoſe who were without them; and reſiſtance to the power of the mother-country by open force was made the ſubject of common converſation. Soon afterwards a copy of the proclamation arrived, which had been iſſued in England, in the month of October, to prevent the exportation of warlike ſtores; and this prohibition ſerved to make the inhabitants of the colonies more eager to procure ſupplies. Mills for making gunpowder, and manufactories for arms, were ſet up in ſeveral of the colonies; and great encouragement was offered for making ſaltpetre.

CHAP. I.

Inſurrection in Rhode Iſland—and in New Hampſhire—Conſequences of ſhutting up Boſton Harbour—Provincial Congreſs at Cambridge, in New England—Hoſtile Deſigns and military Preparations—Preparations in all the Colonies for holding a General Congreſs—Detachment of Britiſh Troops ſent to deſtroy military Stores at Concord—haraſſed by the Americans—driven back by the way of Lexington to Boſton—Boſton inveſted by an American Army—Meaſures reſpecting the State of America taken by the Engliſh Cabinet—Reinforcement of Troops from Britain arrives at Boſton—Battle of Bunker's Hill.

CHAP. I. 1774. Inſurrection in Rhode Iſland.

AS ſoon as the news of the proclamation reached Rhode Iſland, forty pieces of cannon of different ſizes, belonging to the crown, which had been mounted on batteries for the defence of the harbour, were ſeized by the populace, and removed into the country. They did not heſitate to own that this was done to prevent the cannon from falling into the hands of the king's troops, and that they meant to uſe them againſt any power that ſhould offer to moleſt them. By the aſſembly of this province reſolutions were alſo paſſed for procuring at the public expence arms and military ſtores wherever they could be obtained, and for training the militia in military exerciſes.

Dec. 14.

In the province of New Hampſhire too, which had been hitherto moderate, the news of this proclamation cauſed an inſurrection. A number

And in New Hampſhire.

number of armed men aſſembled, and ſurpriſed a ſmall fort called William and Mary, garriſoned only by an officer and five men. They took poſſeſſion of the ordnance, gunpowder, and other military ſtores that were found in it; and theſe being removed, the fort was abandoned, and the officer, with his men, releaſed.

Of all the colonies, that of New York ſhewed the greateſt averſion to giving up an intercourſe with the mother-country in the way of trade. Such of the aſſemblies of the other colonies as had been called together ſince the breaking up of the general congreſs, had approved of its proceedings and confirmed its reſolutions; but the aſſembly of New York, which met in the month of January of this year, refuſed to accede to them. That aſſembly nevertheleſs agreed with the other colonial aſſemblies in all the material points of their grievances; and, to obtain redreſs of theſe, tranſmitted, during their preſent ſeſſion, a petition to be preſented to the king, a memorial to the houſe of lords, and a repreſentation and a remonſtrance to the houſe of commons.

Conſequences of ſhutting up Boſton harbour.

In the mean time the difficulties which the inhabitants of Boſton had to contend with were every day increaſing in conſequence of the inclemency of the winter ſeaſon. Contributions had been raiſed, and ſupplies of proviſions ſent to them from the other colonies; but theſe were precarious, and not equal to their wants. In a large trading town, ſuch as Boſton, where ſo many of the inhabitants were entirely ſupported by commerce and its dependencies, ſcarcely any thing could befal them ſo ruinous as ſhutting up their harbour. No one was exempt from feeling its effects in ſome ſhape or other, and many were plunged in the deepeſt diſtreſs. Their ſufferings they imputed to the Britiſh miniſtry and parliament, and they felt all the reſentment that the ills under which they ſmarted were calculated to inſpire. But the military force now collected at Boſton was ſufficiently reſpectable to prevent them from breaking out into thoſe violences which their former refractory conduct gave reaſon to expect, and which their preſent feelings probably dictated. Theſe feelings were the more grievous for being repreſſed; and the only conſolation which they received was in knowing that, throughout America, the inhabitants of Boſton were conſidered as martyrs to the American cauſe.

Provincial congreſs at Cambridge.

When the new provincial congreſs met at Cambridge, in the month of February, they publiſhed an addreſs to the people calculated to alarm them with freſh apprehenſions; and in concluſion told them that, from the information which they had received, they had reaſon to apprehend that the Britiſh miniſtry meant to devote to ſudden deſtruction that province in particular, for having refuſed, with the other colonies, tamely to ſubmit to the moſt ignominious ſlavery. Having thus awakened their fears, they, in the moſt perſuaſive terms, exhorted the militia in general, and the minute-men * in particular, to perfect themſelves without delay in military diſcipline. They afterwards paſſed reſolutions for the providing and making of arms; and forbad, in the ſtricteſt manner, the inhabitants of the province from ſupplying the king's troops with any thing requiſite for military ſervice.

Their hoſtile deſigns and military preparations.

Such hoſtile intentions being manifeſted by the provincial congreſs, whoſe edicts were obeyed as laws; it became neceſſary for the governor to diſable them, as far as was in his power, from acting in a hoſtile manner, by ſeizing on ſuch of their military ſtores as came within his reach. With this view, on the twenty-ſixth of February, he ordered a ſmall detachment of troops, under the command of a field officer, to proceed to Salem, and take poſſeſſion of ſome braſs cannon and field-pieces, which had been brought there for the

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* Volunteer corps from the militia, who engaged to hold themſelves in readineſs for ſervice at a minute's notice.

uſe of the provincial congreſs. The troops ſent on this ſervice were embarked on board a tranſport at Boſton, in the morning, and carried by water to Marble Head. Having landed there, they marched to Salem: But the cannon were removed before their arrival, and, according to the beſt information they could receive, only that morning. The officer, hoping to overtake them upon the road, marched on into the country until he was ſtopped by a ſmall river, over which there had been a draw-bridge. Upon his approach, the bridge was taken up by a number of people aſſembled upon the oppoſite ſhore, who peremptorily refuſed to let it down, alleging that the road was not a public one, and the bridge private property, over which he had no right to paſs without the owner's conſent. The officer, ſeeing a boat in the river, was about to make uſe of it for tranſporting his men; but ſome country people, who were near, perceiving his intention, jumped into the boat, and with axes began to cut holes in her bottom. Theſe people were interrupted by the ſoldiers, and a kind of ſcuffle now enſued which of them ſhould keep poſſeſſion of the boat; when a clergyman, who had been a witneſs of the whole tranſaction, ſeeing the officer determined to force his paſſage, and fearing the conſequences that might happen if he met with further reſiſtance, prudently interpoſed, and by his influence prevailed upon the people on the oppoſite ſide to let down the bridge. This was accordingly done; and the detachment paſſed over. But the day was now ſo far ſpent, in conſequence of this interruption, that any further attempt to overtake the cannon, it was thought, would be fruitleſs. The officer marched back his men to Marble Head unmoleſted, reimbarked with them on board the tranſport, and returned to Boſton.

This incident is of little conſequence, except to ſhow on the one hand the ſtrict diſcipline and cautious conduct of the troops, and on the other, the boldneſs with which ſuch conduct inſpired the people of the province to thwart their operations, and obſtruct their movements.

ments. The object of the detachment was defeated by previous intelligence conveyed from Boſton. Although ſome of the moſt violent of its inhabitants had removed into the country, a great majority of thoſe who remained were not leſs hoſtile to all the meaſures of government. By them every action of the governor and every movement of the troops were narrowly watched: Intelligence was conveyed by expreſſes; and the people in the country were previouſly prepared for interrupting, if not defeating, every military operation that was attempted.

Preparations in all the colonies for holding a general congreſs.

Preparations were now making in all the colonies for holding the general congreſs, which was to meet at Philadelphia in the month of May. It has been before obſerved, that the inhabitants of the middle and ſouthern colonies began to arm themſelves individually towards the end of the preceding year: But the buſineſs of arming and putting the country in a ſtate of defence was now taken up by the provincial conventions, which met for the purpoſe of appointing delegates to congreſs. By them reſolutions were paſſed for diſciplining the militia, and for inſtituting corps of volunteers and minute-men, after the example of the New England provinces: And contributions were directed to be raiſed from the people, to be employed in the purchaſe of arms and ammunition. Still however the object of thoſe preparations was not openly avowed in the public proceedings and journals of thoſe conventions; and ſtill they profeſſed loyalty to the king, and attachment to the mother-country.

But the time was faſt approaching, when the maſk was to be thrown off, and when the ſubjects of the ſame ſovereign, marſhalled in oppoſing armies, were to imbrue their hands in each other's blood. In the province of Maſſachuſets Bay the authority of the Britiſh parliament had been firſt called in queſtion; in the ſame province the firſt actual oppoſition to that authority was made; and there it was deſtined that hoſtilities ſhould firſt commence between the mother-country and her colonies.

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Detachment of Britiſh troops ſent to deſtroy military ſtores at Concord,

Information having been brought to Boſton, that a conſiderable quantity of military ſtores purchaſed by the agents for the provincial congreſs, were depoſited at Concord, a town which, as we have already had occaſion to mention, was about twenty miles from Boſton; general Gage, in the night between the eighteenth and nineteenth of April, detached the grenadiers and light-infantry of his army, under the command of lieutenent-colonel Smith of the tenth regiment of foot, and major Pitcairne of the marines, with orders to proceed to Concord, and deſtroy thoſe ſtores: And the following morning another detachment, conſiſting of ſixteen companies of foot, with ſome marines, was ordered to march, under the command of earl Percy, to ſuſtain the firſt. The detachment under lieutenant-colonel Smith, having embarked in boats, was conveyed up Charles River, as far as a place called Phipps's Farm. Being landed there in the night, the troops proceeded on their march to Concord; every precaution being taken, by ſecuring ſuch perſons as they met with, to prevent the people of the country from obtaining any intelligence of their march. But, notwithſtanding this precaution, they had advanced only a few miles, when it was perceived, by the firing of guns and the ringing of bells, that the country was alarmed.

Upon this diſcovery lieutenant-colonel Smith detached ſix companies of light-infantry, to march on in all haſte, and ſecure two bridges on different roads, leading from Concord, and on the other ſide of it. Theſe companies reached Lexington, a town fifteen miles from Boſton, about five in the morning; and as they advanced, ſaw a body of men aſſembled under arms on a green adjoining to the road. Upon the near approach of the Britiſh troops, who queſtioned them as to the cauſe of their being ſo aſſembled, and ordered them to diſperſe, they retired in ſome confuſion: But as they went off, ſeveral guns were fired upon the king's troops from behind a ſtone wall, and from ſome adjoining houſes, which wounded one man, and ſhot major Pitcairne's horſe in two places. The Britiſh troops now returned the fire, by which ſome of the people under arms were killed, and others wounded, and the reſt diſperſed. The light-infantry having been delayed by this unexpected rencounter, were now joined by the grenadiers, and the whole detachment marched on unmoleſted to Concord.

Upon its approach to that place, another body of armed men, or militia, was ſeen aſſembled upon a hill, near the entrance of the town; and the light-infantry were ordered to diſperſe them, whilſt the grenadiers marched on by the direct road to Concord. As the light-infantry aſcended the hill, the militia retreated towards Concord, and paſſed over one of the bridges on the other ſide of it, which was immediately taken poſſeſſion of by the light-infantry. In the mean time the grenadiers were executing the purpoſe of the expedition, by deſtroying the military ſtores found at Concord. Whilſt this was doing, the militia, who had retreated over the bridge, appeared again, to the number of three or four hundred, and advancing up to it, as if they meant to paſs, were fired upon by the Britiſh troops. The fire was returned, and a ſharp action enſued acroſs the river, in which ſeveral on both ſides were killed and wounded. But the purpoſe of the expedition being now accompliſhed, the light-infantry, poſted at the bridge, received orders to retire, and the whole detachment now began their march back to Boſton.

haraſſed by the Americans.

The whole country was by this time alarmed: The minute-men, volunteers, and militia, aſſembled from all quarters, and poſted themſelves amongſt trees, in houſes*, and behind walls, along the road through which the Britiſh troops were to paſs; whilſt the militia, who had been engaged at the bridge, reinforced with others hourly coming in from the country, were ready to preſs upon their rear.

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* An officer, on the march of the ſecond detachment to Concord, obſerved to the commandant, lord Percy, that, in his opinion, the oppoſition to the king's troops would be very little, for that all the windows were ſhut, and the houſes ſeemingly deſerted. "So much the "worſe," lord Percy replied; "for we ſhall be fired at from thoſe very houſes."

Such was the route by which the Britiſh troops had to paſs, fatigued and exhauſted as they were, by conſtant exertion from the preceding evening. And as ſoon as they began their retreat, an inceſſant though irregular fire commenced, which was kept up during the whole of their march back to Lexington, in which they were driven before the Americans like ſheep. At that place they were met by the detachment under lord Percy, with two pieces of cannon. The two detachments reſted on their arms, and received ſome refreſhment.

Driven back by the way of Lexington to ton.

Lord Percy now formed his detachment into a ſquare, in which he incloſed colonel Smith's party, who were ſo much exhauſted with fatigue, that they were obliged to lie down for reſt on the ground, their tongues hanging out of their mouths, like thoſe of dogs after a chaſe. Lord Percy, after refreſhing the troops, moved on towards Boſton, haraſſed the whole of the way by the Americans, who, from behind ſtone walls and other places of ſhelter, kept up on our men an inceſſant fire, on either flank, as well as in front and rear. This fire it would not have ſerved any purpoſe to return; as the Americans were concealed, and kept running from front to flank, and from flank to rear, loading their pieces at one place, and diſcharging them at another.

When the united detachments arrived at Boſton river, lord Percy aſked information of the country people concerning the moſt proper place for croſſing it. But, had he followed the advice he received, his troops, in paſſing the river, muſt have been cut to pieces. Having a general knowledge of the country, he was led to ſuſpect their intelligence, and paſſed the troops at a different place, where the Americans could not with ſafety follow him.

In war there is nothing that ſo much avails as ſecreſy of deſign and celerity of execution: Nor, on the contrary, ſo hurtful as unneceſſary openneſs and procraſtination. General Gage on the evening of the eighteenth of April told lord Percy, that he intended to ſend a detachment to ſeize the ſtores at Concord, and to give the command to colonel Smith, "who knew that he was to go, but not "where." He meant it to be a ſecret expedition, and begged of lord Percy to keep it a profound ſecret. As this nobleman was paſſing from the general's quarters home to his own, perceiving eight or ten men converſing together on the common, he made up to them; when one of the men ſaid — "The Britiſh troops have "marched, but they will miſs their aim." "What aim?" ſaid lord Percy. "Why," the man replied, "the cannon at Concord." Lord Percy immediately returned on his ſteps, and acquainted general Gage, not without marks of ſurprize and diſapprobation, of what he had juſt heard. The general ſaid that his confidence had been betrayed, for that he had communicated his deſign to one perſon only beſides his lordſhip.

As ſoon as the two detachments, after their junction, reſumed their march, they were again annoyed by the provincials, poſted as before, who kept up a continued firing until the Britiſh troops reached Boſton, about ſun-ſet, quite ſpent and worn down with fatigue. 19th April The detachments, together, amounted to ſomewhat more than eighteen hundred men; and the whole loſs ſuſtained, during this long and haraſſing march, on the part of the Britiſh, was ſixty-five killed, one hundred and thirty-ſix wounded, and forty-nine miſſing. Several of Smith's party were ſcalped by the Americans. The loſs of the provincials, as eſtimated by themſelves, amounted to ſixty men, two thirds of whom were killed.

The conduct of colonel Smith in this unfortunate expedition was generally cenſured; but lord Piercy gained, on this occaſion, what he afterwards uniformly ſuſtained, great reputation as an active, brave, and intelligent officer. Such were the events of the day on which blood was firſt ſhed in the conteſt between Great Britain and her colonies: Events which ſerved to ſhew, that if the Americans were yet unacquainted with military diſcipline, they were not deſtitute of either courage or conduct, but knew well, and dared to avail themſelves of, ſuch advantages as they poſſeſſed. The people of the colonies are accuſtomed to the uſe of fire-arms from their earlieſt youth, and are, in general, good markſmen. Such men, placed in a houſe, behind a wall, or amongſt trees, are capable of doing as much execution as regular ſoldiers: And to theſe advantages, which they poſſeſſed during the greateſt part of the nineteenth of April, we may attribute the inconſiderable loſs ſuſtained by them, compared with that of our detachments.

An American army, ſuddenly raiſed, inveſts Boſton.

The retreat of the Britiſh troops to Boſton, which was always intended as ſoon as they had accompliſhed the purpoſe of their march, was repreſented in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay as a defeat; and ſo much were the people of the province elated with their ſuppoſed victory, that nothing now was talked of but driving the king's troops out of Boſton. They were irritated too, by the ſpreading of a report, that one object of the expedition to Concord was to ſeize on John Hancock and Samuel Adams, two very popular and leading characters in the provincial congreſs. The militia from all the diſtant parts of the province, on hearing what had paſſed, poured in ſo faſt, that an army was ſoon aſſembled, amounting to twenty thouſand men, under the command of colonels Ward, Pribble, Heath, Preſcott, and Thomas; officers who had ſerved in the provincial regiments during the late war, and who now acted as generals. With this army they formed a line of encampment of thirty miles in extent, reaching from the river Myſtic on the left to Roxburgh on their right, and incloſing Boſton in the center. They fixed their head quarters at Cambridge, and were ſoon afterwards joined by a large detachment of troops from Connecticut, under colonel Putnam*, an old provincial officer of approved experience and reputation, who had ſerved in the two laſt wars, and now took ſuch a poſition with his detachment as to be able readily to ſuccour ſuch parts of the line of encampment as were neareſt to Boſton. By this force, formidable certainly in point of numbers, was Boſton blockaded: But the works erected on the neck of land which joins that town to the continent, were now ſo well ſtrengthened and covered with cannon, that the provincials, numerous as they were, durſt not attack them.

An army being already in the field, the provincial congreſs, which now removed to Water-town, a place about ten miles from Boſton, paſſed regulations for arraying it, and for fixing the pay of the officers and ſoldiers. Rules and orders for the government of the army were alſo publiſhed, and a vote paſſed for iſſuing a large ſum in paper currency to defray its expences, for the redemption of which the faith of the province was pledged. By the ſame congreſs a reſolution was paſſed on the fifth day of May, declaring that general Gage, by the late tranſactions, had utterly diſqualified himſelf from acting in the province as governor, or in any other capacity, and that no obedience was due to him; but, on the contrary, that he was to be conſidered as an inveterate enemy.

Meaſures of the Britiſh cabinet.

But it is now neceſſary to recur to ſuch meaſures as had been taken in England, during the winter, for reducing the colonies to obedience. Notwithſtanding the union which appeared amongſt them, and their fixed determination not to ſubmit to the authority

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* Colonel, afterwards general, Putnam, at the concluſion of the war in 1763, retired to a ſmall farm, to which he annexed a tavern, an œconomy not uncommon in America, particularly in the province of New England.

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of parliament in the impoſition of taxes, the Britiſh miniſtry determined to perſevere in their coercive plan, but with ſome diſcrimination according to the demerits of the reſpective colonies. The New England provinces were conſidered as the moſt deeply reprehenſible; and as theſe had, early in the preceding year, entered into an aſſociation for giving up all commerce with the mother-country; ſo it was thought reaſonable by the Britiſh miniſtry to interdict them on the other hand from all commerce with any other country; and, as a farther puniſhment, to prohibit them from fiſhing on the Banks of Newfoundland. An act of parliament for theſe purpoſes was accordingly paſſed. But as it ſoon afterwards appeared that moſt of the other colonies were treading faſt in the ſteps of the people of New England, it was thought neceſſary to include them in the ſame prohibition; and another act of parliament was paſſed for this purpoſe, extending to all the other colonies except New-York, North-Carolina, and Georgia. An addition to the land and ſea forces was voted by the houſe of commons, and a large reinforcement ordered to Boſton, under the command of the generals Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne; all of them officers of reputation.

But whilſt the miniſter was thus preparing to enforce his coercive meaſures, he did not altogether lay aſide the hope of reconciliation. With a view to this he moved a reſolution in the houſe of commons as the baſis of a future agreement between the mother-country and the colonies, which, after ſome debate and oppoſition, was carried. The purport of this reſolution was, that when any of the colonies ſhould propoſe, according to their abilities, to raiſe their due proportion towards the common defence; ſuch proportion to be raiſed under the authority of the aſſembly of ſuch province, and to be diſpoſable by parliament; and when ſuch colony ſhould alſo engage to provide for the ſupport of the civil government and the adminiſtration of juſtice within ſuch province; it would be proper, if ſuch propoſal ſhould be approved of by his majeſty in parliament, to forbear, in reſpect of ſuch colony, to levy any duties or taxes, or to impoſe any further duties or taxes, except ſuch as ſhould be neceſſary for the regulation of trade. It was hoped, that the offer of accommodation held out by this reſolution, would be readily accepted by the colonies, in order to avert the calamities impending over them in conſequence of the prohibitory acts of the preſent ſeſſion of parliament already mentioned: And had ſuch an offer been made by the Rockingham adminiſtration previous to the repeal of the ſtamp act, there is ſcarcely any doubt that it would have been then gladly accepted by at leaſt a majority of the colonies, and prevented that union amongſt them ſo fatal to the authority of the mother-country. But it was now too late. The ſeaſon for reconciliation was paſt. The minds of the colonial inhabitants had become ſoured in the proſecution of the diſpute; and every propoſition now made by the Britiſh miniſtry was viewed with jealouſy and received with diſtruſt. A kind of military furor, too, had by this time ſeized the inhabitants of the colonies, and rather than make any ſort of conceſſion to the Britiſh parliament, they were willing to riſque the conſequences of oppoſing in the field their juvenile ardour to the matured ſtrength of the parent ſtate, and in this reſolution they were encouraged to perſiſt by recollecting the events of the nineteenth of April, by which it appeared, according to their manner of reaſoning, that in ſuch a country as America, abounding with dangerous paſſes and woody defiles, the Britiſh troops, with all their valour, diſcipline, and military ſkill, were not, when oppoſed to the Americans, ſo formidable as had been generally apprehended.

Copies of this conciliatory propoſition were tranſmitted by the miniſtry to America; and as ſoon as theſe arrived, the different aſſem-

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blies were convened, before whom they were laid for their conſideration. But this parliamentary reſolution was accepted by none of them as a ground for reconciliation. By ſome it was viewed only as a miniſterial ſcheme for dividing and diſuniting the colonies: By others it was held not to be ſatisfactory, becauſe the amount of the contribution was not left to the diſcretion of the colonial aſſemblies, but was to be determined by the king in parliament: And by all the aſſemblies it was agreed to be referred to the general congreſs, which, they held, was alone competent to decide upon it. A reference to the general congreſs was the ſame thing as a rejection; for it was well known that the Britiſh miniſtry would hold no communication with the general congreſs on that or any other ſubject. Such was the fate of the miniſter's conciliatory propoſition for terminating the diſpute between the mother-country and the colonies.

May. Reinforcement of troops from Britain arrives at Boſton.

Towards the end of May, and in the beginning of June, the expected reinforcements arrived at Boſton, with the generals appointed to command them. From the time of the expedition to Concord the Britiſh troops had continued blockaded in Boſton, the force then under general Gage being too ſmall for any other purpoſe than defence. But this force, now increaſed by the troops lately arrived, was become reſpectable, not ſo much indeed for its numbers, as the excellence of the troops of which it conſiſted.

As a ſtep preparatory to offenſive meaſures, general Gage on the twelfth of June iſſued a proclamation, offering, in his majeſty's name, a free pardon to all thoſe who ſhould forthwith lay down their arms, John Hancock and Samuel Adams only excepted, and threatening with puniſhment all ſuch as ſhould delay to avail themſelves of the proffered mercy. By the ſame proclamation alſo, martial law was declared to be in force in the province, until peace and order ſhould be ſo far reſtored that juſtice might be again adminiſtered in the civil courts. But this proclamation, like others which had been iſſued before, produced no beneficial effect, and was as much diſregarded as they had been.

Adjacent to the peninſula of Boſton, on the north, is another of ſimilar form, called the Peninſula of Charleſtown. They are ſeparated from one another by Charles River, which is navigable, and nearly the breadth of the Thames at London bridge: And on the northern bank of this river, over-againſt Boſton, lies Charleſtown, a ſpacious well-built town, which gives name to the peninſula. The peninſula of Charleſtown, being bounded on the north by the river Medford or Myſtic, and on the eaſt by Boſton harbour, is entirely ſurrounded by navigable water, except where it is joined to the main land by an iſthmus, ſomewhat wider, and more acceſſible than Boſton Neck. In the centre of the peninſula riſes an eminence, called Bunker's Hill, with an eaſy aſcent from the iſthmus, but ſteep on every other ſide; and at the bottom of this hill towards Boſton ſtands Charleſtown. Bunker's Hill was ſufficiently high to overlook any part of Boſton, and near enough to be within cannon-ſhot.

Why a ſituation, from which the town of Boſton was ſo liable to be annoyed, was ſo long neglected, it is not eaſy to aſſign a reaſon *. But, about this time, the provincials receiving information that general Gage had at laſt come to a determination to fortify it, were reſolved to defeat his intention if poſſible, by being the firſt to occupy it; and their reſolution was executed without delay. About nine in the evening of the ſixteenth of June, a ſtrong detachment of provincials moved from Cambridge, and paſſing ſilently over Charleſtown Neck, reached the top of Bunker's Hill unobſerved. Having

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* It is ſaid that general Gage was repeatedly adviſed to occupy and fortify this commanding poſt.

Battle of Bunker's Hill.

previouſly provided themſelves with intrenching tools, they immediately ſet to work, and threw up an intrenchment, reaching from the river Myſtic on the left, to a redoubt on their right, both of which they had nearly completed by the morning; their works being in many places cannon-proof. Although the peninſula was almoſt ſurrounded with ſhips of war and tranſports, the provincials worked ſo ſilently that they were not diſcovered till the morning; when, at break of day, the alarm was given at Boſton, by a cannonade begun upon the provincial works, from the Lively ſhip of war. A battery of ſix guns was ſoon afterwards opened upon them from Cop's Hill, in Boſton; and, about noon, a detachment from the army was landed upon the peninſula of Charleſtown, under the command of major-general Howe and brigadier-general Pigot, with orders to drive the provincials from their works. The troops were formed without oppoſition as ſoon as they landed; but the generals perceiving that the provincials were ſtrongly poſted on the heights, that they were already in great force, and that large columns were every moment coming in to their aſſiſtance, thought it neceſſary to apply for a reinforcement. When the reinforcement arrived, the whole detachment, conſiſting now of more than two thouſand men, formed in two lines, moved on towards the enemy, with the light-infantry on the right wing, commanded by general Howe, and the grenadiers on the left by brigadier-general Pigot; the former to attack the provincial lines, and the latter the redoubt. The attack was begun by a ſharp cannonade from ſome field-pieces and howitzers, the troops advancing ſlowly, and halting at intervals to give time for the artillery to produce ſome effect. The left wing, in advancing, had to contend with a body of provincials, poſted in the houſes in Charleſtown, and in this conflict the town was ſet on fire and burnt to the ground. The provincials upon the hill, ſecure behind their intrenchments, reſerved their fire for the near approach of the Britiſh troops, when a cloſe

A PLAN
OF THE
ACTION AT BUNKERS HILL,

on the 17th of June 1775.

Between HIS MAJESTY'S TROOPS,

Under the Command of MAJOR GENERAL HOWE,

AND THE AMERICAN FORCES:

Engraved for STEDMAN'S HISTORY of the American War.

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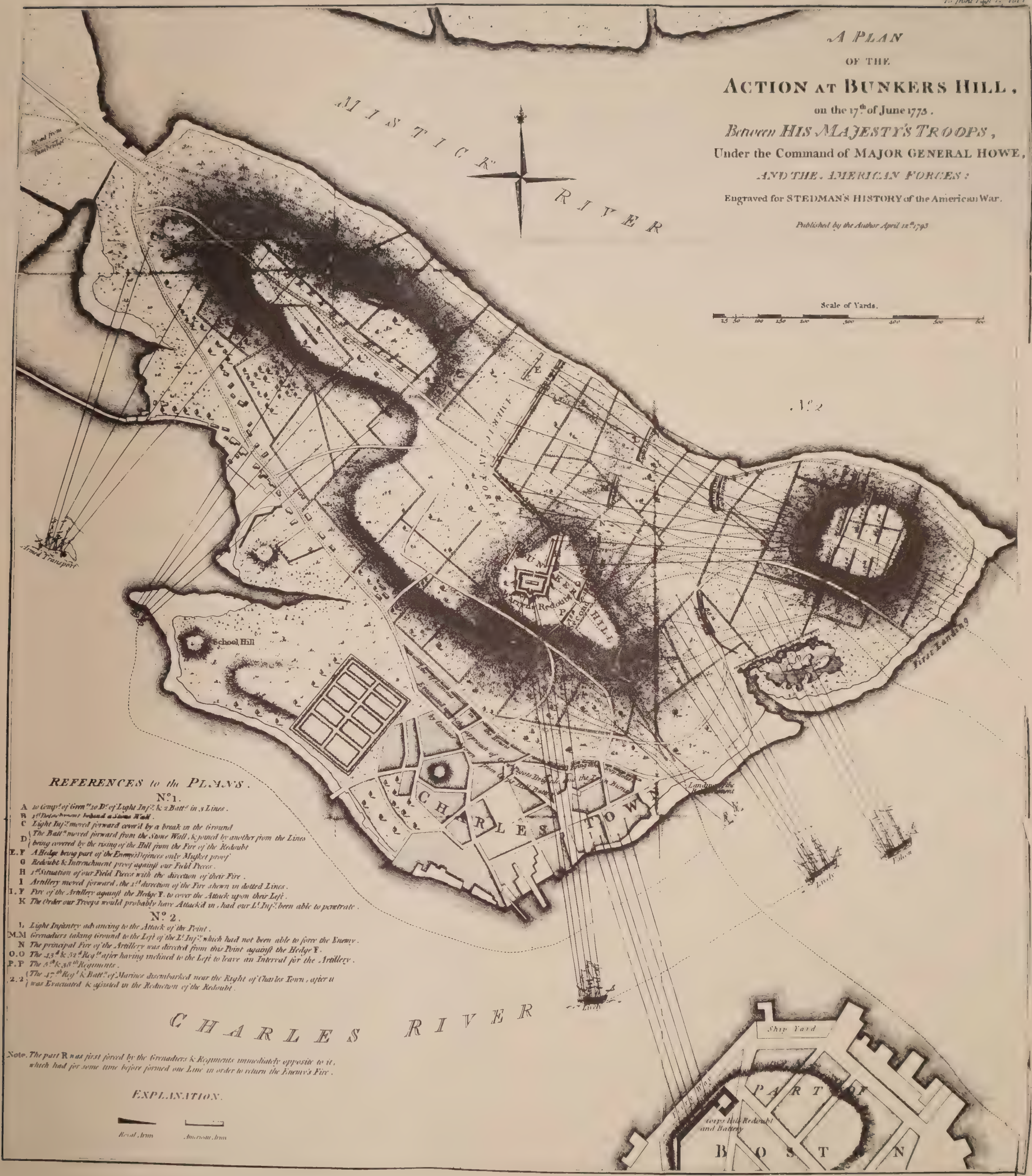
MISTICK RIVER
Road from Cambridge
Scale of Yards.
25 50 100 150 200 300 400 500 600
No. 2
AMERICAN FORCES
BUNKERS HILL
Redoubt
Armed Transport
School Hill
First Landing
Landing of the Reinforcement
CHARLES TOWN
Lively
Falcon
CHARLES RIVER
Ship Yard
PART OF BOSTON
Copps Hill Redoubt and Battery
EXPLANATION.
Royal Army
American Army

REFERENCES *to the* PLANS.

No. 1.

- A 10 Compys of Grenrs 10 Do of Light Infy & 2 Battns in 3 Lines.
- B 1st Detachment behind a Stone Wall.
- C Light Infy moved forward cover'd by a break in the Ground
- D The Battn moved forward from the Stone Wall, & joined by another from the Lines being covered by the rising of the Hill from the Fire of the Redoubt
- E.F A Hedge being part of the Enemy's Defences only Muſket proof
- G Redoubt & Intrenchment proof againſt our Field Pieces.
- H 1st Situation of our Field Pieces with the direction of their Fire.
- I Artillery moved forward, the 2d direction of the Fire shewn in dotted Lines.
- I.F Fire of the Artillery againſt the Hedge F. to cover the Attack upon their Left.
- K The Order our Troops would probably have Attack'd in, had our Lt Infy been able to penetrate.

No. 2.

- L Light Infantry advancing to the Attack of the Point.
- M.M Grenadiers taking Ground to the Left of the Lt Infy which had not been able to force the Enemy.
- N The principal Fire of the Artillery was directed from this Point againſt the Hedge F.
- O.O The 43d & 52d Regts after having inclined to the Left to leave an Interval for the Artillery.
- P.P The 5th & 38th Regiments.
- 2.2 The 47th Regt & Battn of Marines disembarked near the Right of Charles Town, after it was Evacuated & aſsiſted in the Reduction of the Redoubt.

Note. The part R was first forced by the Grenadiers & Regiments immediately opposite to it, which had for some time before formed one Line in order to return the Enemy's Fire.

and unremitting diſcharge of muſketry took place, the provincials in the works, as ſoon as they diſcharged their pieces, being furniſhed with others ready loaded. So inceſſant and ſo deſtructive was this continued blaze of muſketry, that the Britiſh line recoiled, and gave way in ſeveral parts. General Howe, it is ſaid, was, for a few ſeconds, left nearly alone; moſt of the officers who were about him, being either killed or wounded: And it required the utmoſt exertion in all the officers, from the generals down to the ſubalterns, to repair the diſorder which this hot and unexpected fire had produced.

At this juncture, general Clinton, who had arrived from Boſton during the engagement, was moſt eminently ſerviceable in rallying the troops; and by a happy manœuvre almoſt inſtantaneouſly brought them back to the charge. The Britiſh ſoldiers, ſtung with the reflection of having given way before an enemy whom they deſpiſed, now returned with irreſiſtible impetuoſity, forced the intrenchments with fixed bayonets, and drove the provincials from their works. The latter, thus driven, fled with precipitation; but as no purſuit was ordered, they were ſuffered to retire unmoleſted, except in paſſing Charleſtown Neck, which was enfiladed by the guns of the Glaſgow ſloop of war, and ſome floating batteries; and here the provincials ſuſtained their greateſt loſs.

This deſtructive, although ſucceſsful attack, coſt the Britiſh, in killed and wounded, nearly one-half the whole detachment. The total loſs amounted to one thouſand and fifty-four, of which two hundred and twenty-ſix were killed, and eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded, nineteen commiſſioned officers being amongſt the former, and ſeventy amongſt the latter. The loſs on the ſide of the provincials, as eſtimated by themſelves, was four hundred and forty-nine; of theſe one hundred and forty-five being killed or miſſing, and three hundred and four wounded. Amongſt the ſlain on the ſide of the Britiſh, were lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie, and majors Pitcairne and Williams; all of them officers of experienced bravery and diſtinguiſhed merit, who had ſignalized themſelves on this fatal day, in an eminent degree; as alſo did major Spendlove, who died of his wounds ſome days after. Amongſt the provincials, ſome officers of rank were alſo killed, but the loſs of doctor Warren, who commanded in the redoubt, was moſt lamented.

If any thing had been wanting to ſhow the bravery and diſcipline of the Britiſh troops, the action at Bunker's Hill furniſhed an ample proof of both. Twice they were ſtopped, and twice returned to the charge. In the middle of a hot ſummer's day, incumbered with three days proviſions, their knapſacks on their backs, which, together with cartouche-box, ammunition, and firelock, may be eſtimated at one hundred and twenty-five pounds weight, with a ſteep hill to aſcend, covered with graſs reaching to their knees, and interſected with the walls and fences of various incloſures, and in the face of a hot and well-directed fire, they gained a complete victory over three times their own number (for ſuch was the Britiſh general's eſtimate) of provincials ſtrongly poſted behind a breaſt-work, and defended by a redoubt. But, whatever credit may be due to the valour of the troops, the plan of the attack has been ſeverely cenſured.

Had the Symmetry tranſport, which drew little water, and mounted eighteen nine-pounders, been towed up Myſtic channel, and been brought to, within muſket-ſhot of the left flank, which was quite naked; or one of our covered boats, muſket-proof, carrying a heavy piece of cannon, been towed cloſe in; one charge on their uncovered flank, it was ſaid, might have diſlodged them in a moment. It has been alſo ſaid, that the Britiſh troops might have been landed in the rear of the provincial intrenchment, and thereby have avoided thoſe difficulties and impediments which they had to encounter in marching up in front. By ſuch a diſpoſition, too, the breaſt-work of the Americans would have been rendered uſeleſs, and their whole detachment, being incloſed in the peninſula, muſt have either ſurrendered at diſcretion, or attempted, in order to get back to the main land, to cut their way through the Britiſh line. Further ſtill, it has been ſaid, that the ſucceſs of the day was the leſs brilliant, from no purſuit being ordered, after the provincials had begun to take to flight.

Few engagements are free from unfortunate accidents and miſtakes: And ſome which occurred in the action at Bunker's Hill, are ſuppoſed to have rendered that day more diſaſtrous than it would have otherwiſe been to the Britiſh. During the engagement, a ſupply of ball for the artillery, ſent from the ordnance department in Boſton, was found to be of larger dimenſions than fitted the calibres of the field-pieces that accompanied the detachment—an overſight which prevented the farther uſe of the artillery: But a diſadvantage, perhaps, ſtill greater, was the unneceſſary load already mentioned, under which the Britiſh troops marched to the attack; and by which they were greatly exhauſted before they came to the ſcene of action. This circumſtance was univerſally cenſured as unmilitary and abſurd. Another error certainly was, that, inſtead of confining our attack to the enemy's left wing only, the aſſault was made on the whole front. Their left was covered with nothing more than a breaſt-work of rails and hay, eaſy to be ſcrambled over; and behind it, was an open hill which commanded their redoubt and lines.

CHAP. II.

Deſigns of Congreſs on Canada—Capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point—Fort Chamblée—St. John's—and Montreal—Siege of Quebec.

CHAP. II.

1775.

ALL the colonies, now united, vied with each other in profeſſions of invincible attachment to the common cauſe; and the congreſs beheld their power acknowledged, in a very great degree, from Nova Scotia to Georgia. And as it was now evident that the mother-country was as reſolutely determined to maintain, as they were to reſiſt, her authority, they began to concert meaſures for ſupporting a war, and, in the firſt place, to conſider where that authority was moſt vulnerable. With theſe ſentiments they caſt their eyes on the province of Canada.

Deſigns of congreſs on Canada.

Canada, ſurrounded by rivers and lakes, and ſtretching from Nova Scotia, in an oblong direction, almoſt to the ſouthern extremity of Penſylvania, was conveniently ſituated for hoſtile invaſion, and would, if reduced, prove a moſt important acquiſition: Nor were various moral circumſtances wanting to encourage the Americans to commence hoſtilities by an attack on that extenſive region. They were not unacquainted with that general odium that attended the Quebec act among the Canadians, who ſaw that it intended, by eſtabliſhing the French laws, to introduce arbitrary power. Neither were they ignorant that the rejection of the petition preſented againſt that offenſive law, had weakened the attachment of the inhabitants to the mother-country; by which country they conceived that they had been treated with injuſtice and oppreſſion; inaſmuch as, though ſubject to her power, they were deprived of the chief bleſſings reſulting from her conſtitution. The ſupporters of the American cauſe failed not to place thoſe arguments in as forcible a light as poſſible: Nor were their repreſentations without effect. The congreſs however did not wait for the full reſult of thoſe diſcontents and reaſonings to which they gave birth, but came to a reſolution to attack our province while they might do it with advantage.

3d May.

Capture of Ticonderoga,

Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the former ſituated at the north end of Lake George, and the latter near the ſouthern extremity of Lake Champlain, form the gates on that quarter of Canada. Theſe poſts had already been ſecured in the following manner: A volunteer, of the name of Ethan Allen, aſſembled, of his own accord, about fifty men, and proceeded immediately to the environs of the firſt-mentioned fortreſs, commanded by captain De la Place of the twenty-ſixth regiment, who had under his command about ſixty men. Allen, who had often been at Ticonderoga, obſerved a complete want of diſcipline in the garriſon, and that they even carried their ſupine negligence to the length of never ſhutting the gates. Having diſpoſed his ſmall force in the woods, he went to captain De la Place, with whom he was well acquainted, and prevailed on him to lend him twenty men, for the pretended purpoſe of aſſiſting him in tranſporting goods acroſs the lake. Theſe men he contrived to make drunk; and, on the approach of night, drawing his own people from their ambuſcade, he advanced to the garriſon, of which he immediately made himſelf maſter *. As there was not one perſon awake,

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* The ſtores taken at Ticonderoga were between 112 and 120 iron cannon, from 6 to 24 pounders; 50 ſwivels of different ſizes, 2 ten inch mortars, 1 howitzer, 1 cohorn, 10 tons of muſket balls, 3 cart-loads of flints, 30 new carriages, a conſiderable quantity of ſhells, a warehouſe full of materials to carry on boat-building, 100 ſtand of ſmall arms, 10 caſks of very indifferent

CHAP. II. 1775.

awake, though there was a ſentry at the gate, they were all taken priſoners. On the commandant's aſking Allen, by what authority he required him to ſurrender the fort, he anſwered, "I demand "it in the name of the Great Jehovah, and the continental con- "greſs." The reduction of Crown Point, which had neither guard nor garriſon, became a matter of courſe. Allen alſo ſurpriſed Skeneſborough, belonging to major Skene, who, with his ſon and negroes, were taken priſoners. About the ſame time, an American officer, afterwards highly diſtinguiſhed, ſeized the only ſhip of the royal navy on the Lake Champlain. Benedict Arnold, at the commencement of the difference between Great Britain and America, was placed at the head of a company of volunteers by the inhabitants of Newhaven. As ſoon as he received intelligence of the affair at Lexington, he aſſembled his company, and declared his intention of proceeding to Boſton. Having obtained their conſent, he applied to a committee, to which general Wooſter belonged, for ammunition. After ſome demur they ſupplied him, and he marched off with his company to the American head-quarters, which he reached on the twenty-ninth of April.

and of Crown Point.

The whole military force of Canada, at this period, did not exceed two regiments, the ſeventh and the twenty-ſixth, containing together about eight hundred men: For ſo much did general Carleton rely on his influence with the Canadians, and the repreſentations of the clergy, that in the preceding year aſſurances were ſent to general Gage at Boſton, that a corporal's command was ſufficient for the defence of the province. Immediately however on the reduction of Crown Point, Ticonderoga, and the king's ſhip on the Lake Champlain,

indifferent power, 2 braſs cannons, 30 barrels of flour, and 18 barrels of pork. The priſoners were 1 captain, 1 gunner, 2 ſerjeants, and 44 rank and file, beſides women and children. Captain de la Place, notwithſtanding his ſhameful conduct, was not brought to a court-martial, but was ſuffered to ſell out.

Champlain, the two regiments were ordered to St. John's, a fort about twelve miles from Montreal, which was ſtrengthened by two redoubts, that were ordered to be conſtructed on their arrival.

No ſooner was intelligence of the ſucceſs of the Americans received at Boſton, than general Gage diſpatched brigadier-general Preſcott, and two officers of inferior rank, with two ſhips to Montreal, where they arrived in July. About the ſame time alſo colonel Guy Johnſtone arrived at that place with ſeven hundred of the warriors of the Five Nations, who propoſed to general Carleton to retake Crown Point and Ticonderoga, alleging that theſe places were but weakly garriſoned by the Americans. This project was not adopted by the general. July.

In purſuance of the reſolutions of congreſs to attack Canada, the generals Schuyler and Montgomery were diſpatched with three thouſand men to Lake Champlain, acroſs which flat-bottomed boats were to convey them down the Sorrel. And, in order that their paſſage might not be obſtructed, they took poſſeſſion of an iſle called the Iſle aux Noix, commanding the entrance into the lake. Hence they marched to St. John's, where they arrived on the ſixth of September. The moment they landed they were attacked by a party of Indians, who obliged them to retreat to their boats, and to return to Iſle aux Noix. September.

General Schuyler having fallen into an indiſpoſition of body, the command of the detachment devolved of courſe on general Montgomery, who being joined by ſeveral parties of Indians, offended at their rejection by general Carleton, and the remainder of the troops deſtined for this expedition, reſolved to advance immediately and lay ſiege to St. John's.

The whole military force of Canada being thus concentered in one point, colonel Allen, the ſame Allen to whom the Americans were indebted for the reduction of Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and who knew the weak ſtate of Montreal, reſolved to add, if poſſible, this important place to his other conqueſts.

With a party of about one hundred and fifty men, compoſed of Americans and Indians, he marched to the banks of the river St. Laurence, which he croſſed in the night, about three miles below Montreal. Intelligence however by this time had been received of their approach; and the town's-people, with about thirty-ſix of the twenty-ſixth regiment, being embodied under the command of major Campbell, attacked and beat back colonel Allen's detachment, and took the colonel himſelf priſoner.

On this an order was diſpatched to colonel Maclean, a brave, indefatigable, and experienced officer, then at Quebec, to procure as many recruits as he could, and haſten to that part where the river Sorrel diſcharges itſelf into the Gulph of St. Laurence. The colonel, by unwearied diligence, raiſed a force of three hundred and ſeventy Canadians, with whom he marched to the poſt to which he was ordered, where he was reinforced by about two hundred more of the natives. Here he remained waiting for orders, and expecting to be joined by general Carleton, who intended to croſs the river at Montreal, and march to the relief of St. John's.

But it unfortunately happened that at the place where the general attempted to land, his boats could not be brought nearer than within a muſket ſhot of the ſhore, where, too, the enemy had planted two pieces of cannon, which annoyed them ſeverely. It was a ſubject of general animadverſion, that he had attempted to land at the only place where oppoſition might be expected, and contrary to the advice of the moſt experienced inhabitants. There were other places where he might have landed in ſafety. Several of our men were killed: The few who landed were inſtantly taken priſoners; and the general, with the ſmall remainder of his detachment, was forced to return to Montreal.

In

Capture of Fort Chamblée.

In the mean time, general Montgomery had taken Fort Chamblée, a ſmall fortreſs, five miles above St. John's, and commanded by major Stopford, of the ſeventh regiment, at the head of about one hundred and ſixty men, with a few artillery. The whole of the detachment headed by Montgomery did not exceed, when greateſt, two thouſand five hundred men; nor the force ſent againſt Chamblée, under a lieuteuant colonel, three hundred. For at leaſt fifteen days there was no breach made in the wall, nor at any time any impreſſion made that deſerved that name; for the enemy, who had only two ſix-pounders, and next to no ammunition, had never formed a regular battery *. The garriſon did not want powder and other ammunition; but they were poorly clothed, and otherwiſe ill-provided. On the third of November they ſurrendered to the Americans, on the condition of being allowed to go out with the honours of war. It was generally and deeply regretted that this fort was not timeouſly reinforced, as it might have been, and alſo that the ammunition was not deſtroyed; as there was a ſally-port through which it might have been thrown, even in day-light, and without the knowledge of the enemy, into the river.

Nov. 3.

The ammunition found in Chamblée † enabled the American general to purſue the ſiege of St. John's, which, for want of proviſions and ammunition, was under the neceſſity of ſurrendering unconditionally on the thirteenth of November §. The works of St.

Capture of St. John's.

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* A ſmall hole was made in the wall, but not within leſs than twenty-five feet from the ground.

† Amounting to 80 barrels of flour, 11 of rice, 7 of peaſe, 6 firkins of butter, 134 barrels of pork, 124 barrels of gunpowder, 300 ſwivel ſhot, 1 box of muſket ſhot, 6564 muſket cartridges, 150 ſtand of French arms, 3 royal mortars, 61 ſhells, 500 hand grenades, 83 royal fuſileer's muſkets, 83 accoutrements, and rigging for 3 veſſels. As the aſſailants were reduced to their laſt round of ſhot, if it had not been for the ſurrender of Chamblée, they muſt have abandoned their attempt on Canada.

§ In this fort were found 17 braſs ordnance from 2 to 24 pounders, 2 eight-inch howitzers, 7 mortars, 22 iron ordnance from 3 to 9 pounders, a conſiderable quantity of ſhot

St. John's had been ſuffered to remain in bad order, and without ſufficient ſtores, although the governor had long been informed that a deſcent on Canada was in contemplation. Ammunition might, in good time, have been thrown in from Chamblée, only twelve miles diſtant. It is but juſtice here to mention that the garriſon, conſiſting of upwards of five hundred regulars, and above one hundred Canadian volunteers, behaved with great fortitude and perſeverance, though, from the diſadvantages juſt mentioned, they were forced to ſurrender. Immediately on the ſurrender of St. John's, general Carleton quitted Montreal, as it was incapable of making any defence. It fell of courſe into the hands of the American general.

and of Montreal.

Apprehenſions were now entertained for the ſafety of Quebec, and not without reaſon; for at this period it was ill provided with men, and its fortifications were in a ruinous condition. The garriſon contained but one captain, two ſubalterns, and fifty men of the ſeventh regiment, one lieutenant-colonel, ſix captains, twelve ſubalterns, and three hundred and fifty of colonel Maclean's corps then raiſing, five companies of Britiſh militia, containing each about forty men, ſix companies of Canadian militia, about fifty men each, a battalion of ſeamen, under the command of captain Hamilton of the Lizard frigate, amounting to two hundred and fifty men, and a few of the artillery. There were no other works than a wall, ſurrounding the town; the parapets were broken down in ſeveral places, and

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ſhot and ſhells, and about 800 ſtand of ſmall arms, with a few naval ſtores. The capture of St. John's muſt undoubtedly be attributed to the ſhameful ſurrender of Chamblée by major Stopford, and to the reprehenſible negligence of the commanding officers at Montreal and Quebec. It was well known that St. John's poſſeſſed neither a ſufficient quantity of ſtores nor proviſions; yet no aſſiſtance was afforded them in either of theſe articles, though both of them could have been procured with ſufficient eaſe from Chamblée and Montreal, from the former place even by land carriage. The fort however, notwithſtanding theſe diſadvantages, was moſt gallantly defended, and was ſurrendered only on account of the want of proviſions and ammunition.

there was neither glacis nor covered-way. The majority of its inhabitants were but ill affected to the Britiſh cauſe; and the Quebec act, with the rejection of their petition againſt it, had in a manner alienated their affections from the mother-country, as already obſerved. At this period general Carleton was not very popular; for when the Quebec act was in contemplation, he had taken an active part in the framing of it, and, on his examination before the houſe of commons, had caſt ſome reflections on the conduct of the Britiſh merchants of that province. His manners, beſides, were not conciliating, and he had always attached himſelf to the Canadian nobleſſe. The Americans were not ignorant of theſe circumſtances, which, with good reaſon, they flattered themſelves would operate in their favour.

Colonel Maclean in the mean time, with his detachment, which decreaſed daily by deſertion, ſtill remained in expectation of receiving orders at Sorrel; which place, however, he was at length, without waiting for orders from ſir Guy Carleton, determined to quit on the following account: On the fifth of November, an expreſs was tranſmitted to him, acquainting him that colonel Arnold had unexpectedly arrived at a place called Point Levy, oppoſite Quebec, and that the city was in the moſt imminent danger.

At the time when the provincial army was encamped before Boſton, colonel Arnold laid before general Waſhington the following plan: About one hundred and thirty miles to the northward of Boſton, a river called the Kennebeck, ſtretches from the ſea as far northward as the lake St. Pierre, which is at no great diſtance from the city of Quebec. The colonel propoſed to ſail up the river with a detachment of one thouſand five hundred men, and penetrating through the ſwamps, foreſts, and hilly land that ſeparate New England from Canada, beyond the ſources of the Kennebeck, to ſurpriſe Quebec; which being unprepared for ſuch an attempt, would fall an eaſy prey. General Waſhington having teſtified his approbatio of the propoſal, the colonel ſet out on his expedition. Extreme were the difficulties and dangers he encountered and ſurmounted with the moſt aſtoniſhing fortitude and perſeverance. The Kennebeck is full of rocks and ſhoals, which often obliged this gallant detachment to carry their boats and rafts on their backs for miles along the ſhore. Nor when they had traverſed the length of the Kennebeck were their difficulties diminiſhed. The ſwampy grounds, added to the fatigue already endured, produced a variety of diſorders; proviſions began to fail, and a third part of the detachment, on ſome trivial pretence, deſerted with a colonel at their head. Difficulties however ſeemed only to invigorate Arnold: Neither diſpirited by the deſertion of a part of his army, nor by the diſeaſes under which many of the remainder laboured, the colonel left the ſick behind him, and marched on. Six weeks after his departure from Boſton he arrived on the plains of Canada, and immediately encamped oppoſite to Quebec, at a ſpot called Point Levy.

The conſternation occaſioned by his unexpected arrival, and by the intrepidity of the atchievement, was univerſal; and had not the ſmall-craft and boats been fortunately removed before his approach, he would doubtleſs, in the general conſternation, have made himſelf maſter of the city. The removal of theſe produced a delay of ſome days, to which Quebec owed her ſafety; for colonel Maclean, with his ſmall detachment, having quitted Sorrel, after having informed ſir Guy Carleton by letter of his intention, advanced by forced marches to Quebec, where he arrived in the evening of the thirteenth of November. On the ſucceeding day, Arnold, by the help of a dark night, having landed his men on the other ſide of the river, and being totally ignorant of colonel Maclean's arrival, attacked the city at the gate of St. Louis, but was repulſed with ſlaughter; the city being ſtrengthened by ſome pieces of cannon that were landed from a frigate in the river. Arnold receiving intelligence from ſeveral Canadians reſiding in Quebec, that it was propoſed to attack him early in the morning of the nineteenth, removed his men to Point au Tremble, twenty miles diſtant from Quebec.

On the twentieth, general Carleton, who had made his eſcape through the enemy's craft in a whale-boat, arrived in the city, and immediately began to make vigorous preparations for its defence. At the ſame time he expreſſed his entire approbation of colonel Maclean's conduct, and publicly thanked him for his very judicious and gallant conduct.

Arnold, who had brought no artillery with him, and who now diſcovered the impoſſibility of taking the city without that advantage, contented himſelf with returning to the ſpot he had formerly occupied, where he could intercept all ſupplies and communications, and where he reſolved to wait the arrival of Montgomery. Montgomery, after the capture of Montreal, employed himſelf in conſtructing flat boats to attack the Britiſh armaments, which, conſiſting of eleven armed veſſels, on board of which were general Preſcot, and ſome other officers of rank, together with a large quantity of military ſtores, was obliged to ſurrender to his victorious arms. Proceeding immediately to Quebec, he arrived there on the fifth of December, and ſummoned the city to ſurrender. The ſummons was treated with contempt, and general Carleton refuſed all correſpondence with him. Batteries were then immediately opened, which did little damage, and were demoliſhed almoſt as ſoon as they were erected. The whole artillery and fortifications of the city were committed to the management of colonel Maclean (whoſe indefatigable diligence and intrepid demeanour during the whole of the ſiege acquired him infinite honour), and every poſſible preparation was made to defend the city to the laſt extremity.

Montgomery and Arnold were now in a moſt critical ſituation from the want of proper artillery, for they had none heavier than twelve pounders. They ſaw themſelves unable to make any impreſſion on the fortifications of Quebec; and from the malcontents they had nothing now to expect, becauſe each had thought it moſt prudent to join the common cauſe for the preſervation of his own private property. Winter was approaching faſt, and to conſume it on the plains of Canada was a proſpect moſt dreary and unpromiſing; yet, on the other hand, it was eſſentially neceſſary that the firſt campaign ſhould be cloſed with a brilliancy that ſhould prevent the public ardour from experiencing any diminution.

Thus ſituated, it was reſolved to ſtorm the city. Forlorn indeed were the hopes of ſucceſs; but forlorn, at any rate, was the proſpect before them; and the reſolution was not abandoned. It was ſuppoſed that Montgomery was averſe to this meaſure, but he was under the neceſſity of giving his aſſent, becauſe a large number of his men, whoſe time of ſervice had nearly expired, threatened to leave him immediately if the attempt were not made. The neceſſary diſpoſition for ſtorming the town was accordingly put in execution, and Montgomery reſolved to lead the forlorn hope. Four attacks were to be made at the ſame time—two falſe ones, by Cape Diamond and St. John's Gate; and two real, under Cape Diamond, by Drummond's Wharf and the Potaſh. The attacks were to be begun at break of day on the thirty-firſt of December 1775, and the firing of rockets was to be the ſignal. By ſome miſtake however, the attacks on Cape Diamond and St. John's Gate were begun firſt, and the Engliſh diſcovering them to be merely feints, poſted only a ſlight force to defend thoſe points, and conveyed the greater part of their ſtrength to the lower town, where with good reaſon they imagined the real attacks were to be made. Montgomery headed one of theſe attacks, Arnold the other. Montgomery, with nine hundred men, had to paſs a dangerous part, where he was between two fires. He led his men however to the attack with that coolneſs and intrepidity which never forſook him. Captain Bairnsfeather, the maſter of a tranſport, who defended this poſt, ſuffered the enemy's detachment to advance within fifty yards before a gun was fired. A dreadful diſcharge of cannon was then poured upon them, and almoſt the firſt who fell was Montgomery. The Americans, deprived thus of their gallant leader, pauſed a moment, but did not retreat. They marched onward to the attack with firmneſs, and for half an hour ſuſtained a moſt galling diſcharge of cannon and muſquetry. Finding then that their attempts could not be attended with ſucceſs, they withdrew from the attack, and retreated.

Arnold, who at the head of ſeven hundred men attacked the city at the Saut des Matelots, was rather more ſucceſsful. The Canadian guard, appointed to defend it, ran away after the firſt fire; and of the ſeamen who managed the guns, all were either killed or wounded. Arnold having the misfortune to receive a wound in the leg early in the engagement, was obliged to retire; but the next in command continued the attack with unabated vigour. The firſt and the ſecond barriers were taken, after an obſtinate reſiſtance, and againſt the third a ladder was already placed to convey the enemy into the town, when a detachment of colonel Maclean's regiment under captain Nairn, and a party with colonel Caldwell at their head, fortunately arrived. Captain Nairn immediately ſeized the ladder, and by his reſolute conduct drove the enemy from the houſe againſt which they had fixed it. They were then driven from the barrier, after a moſt deſperate attack, and purſued to ſome diſtance. In theſe attacks the

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the loſs on the part of the Engliſh was but trifling, nor did the Americans loſe above fifty men.

Colonel Arnold, though thus diſappointed in his endeavours againſt Quebec, reſolved not to withdraw from the province. He ſtill remained encamped on the heights of Abraham, whence he could intercept any ſupplies that might be attempted to be conveyed into the city, and where he hoped to increaſe his ſmall detachment by ingratiating himſelf with the Canadians.

Such was the iſſue of the expedition againſt Canada, and ſuch the termination of the firſt campaign, in which the Americans had acquired great military diſtinction; yet brilliantly (though certainly unſucceſsfully) as the firſt campaign was concluded, the Americans thought their military glory dearly purchaſed with the loſs of the gallant Montgomery.

Montgomery, at the concluſion of the laſt war, retired to America, where he married. Here his character was ſo univerſally reſpected, that at the commencement of the diſturbances he was invited by congreſs to defend their cauſe, and honoured with the rank of brigadier-general. His manners were eaſy and conciliating, and he poſſeſſed in a peculiar degree the art of acquiring the confidence of thoſe whom he commanded. In his perſon he was tall and ſlender, but well limbed. The day after the attack his body was found, and upon examining it, a wound was diſcovered in each thigh, and one on his head.

CHAP. III.

Situation of Affairs in Virginia, North and South Carolina, and at Boſton.—1775, 1776.

CHAP. III. 1775. Situation of affairs in Virginia.

THE fatal effects of diſorder and tumult were not felt, however, ſolely in the northern provinces. In the ſouth the ſituation of affairs was equally critical and alarming. The governor of Virginia at this period was the earl of Dunmore, a man of ſufficient firmneſs and reſolution, and who had been formerly very popular. His popularity, however, was now rapidly declining; for, at the commencement of the diſturbances in the other colonies, he had tranſmitted to the government of Great Britain an account of the ſtate of the province of Virginia. The particulars of this ſtatement, by ſome means becoming known, highly incenſed the planters, to whom it chiefly related. It repreſented them as encumbered with debts, of which they ſeemed anxious to rid themſelves by encouraging rebellion. It accuſed them of impeding the operations of juſtice, in order to procure temporary advantages by ſuch delays; and it concluded by deducing from their conduct a prediction that they would ſoon attach themſelves openly to thoſe who oppoſed the mother-country.

The planters were more highly enraged on account of the truths which this repreſentation contained. They poured upon the governor the foulleſt torrents of invective and abuſe, and inſinuated that his lordſhip, in conjunction with adminiſtration, had formed a deſign of aſſaſſinating the ſpeaker of their aſſembly, Mr. Randolph.

In order to add to the effect of this inſinuation, the corporation of Williamſburg preſented an addreſs to Mr. Randolph, who returned an anſwer, not at all calculated to diſappoint the wiſhes of thoſe with whom it had originated. While the public mind was thus ſtimulated, an event occurred which was made a pretence for taking up arms.

Lord Dunmore, foreſeeing the conſequences of this ſtate of fermentation, and unwilling to place the means of violence within the power of the planters, had early in May removed the gunpowder from the public magazine at Williamſburg. The motives of this meaſure being eaſily penetrated, an armed force aſſembled under the command of a Mr. Henry, a man poſſeſſed of great influence and popularity, in order to compel a reſtitution of the powder. This detachment, however, proceeded no further than within fifteen miles of Williamſburg, where they were met by the magiſtrates of the city, who prevailed on them to depart, after having entered into an agreement that the receiver-general of the province ſhould become ſecurity for the payment of the gunpowder.

But the reign of temperance and moderation was now at an end; public meetings and military aſſociations were univerſally encouraged; and the aſſembly of the province, approving the conduct of Mr. Henry, ordered a guard to be provided for the ſafety of the magazine, without ſubmitting this ſtep to the conſideration of the governor.

In conſequence of lord Dunmore's intimations to the government of Great Britain, ſeveral conciliatory propoſitions were tranſmitted to his lordſhip, who, early in June, laid them before the council of Virginia. The council acceded to them; but the aſſembly unanimouſly refuſed their acquieſcence. Scarcely had this rejection been conveyed to his lordſhip, when, from a private channel, he received intelligence of a deſign upon his life. It is probable that this was only a falſe alarm, conveyed by the malcontents to the governor, in order to induce him to retire from the province. Whether it was or was not, his lordſhip certainly adopted the moſt prudent line of conduct: For immediately on receiving this intimation, he abandoned his houſe and property, and with his lady and children retired on board the Fowey man of war. The motives for this ſtep he tranſmitted to both houſes, who immediately united in addreſſing his lordſhip; aſſuring him that his ſuſpicions were ill-founded, and beſeeching him, for the ſake of the public peace, to return to the capital. But his lordſhip, unwilling to commit himſelf in a manner to their cuſtody, declined complying with the contents of the addreſs. Nevertheleſs, he ſubmitted to their conſideration the ſubſequent propoſition: That he would either correſpond with the council and aſſembly from the Fowey, or adjourn them to York, about twelve miles from Williamſburg, where he had no objection to reſide, and terminate the buſineſs of the ſeſſion. This propoſal, however, was rejected, and both houſes continued ſitting. After having, on a trivial pretence, increaſed the military eſtabliſhment, by the addition of a company of riflemen, they proceeded to inveſtigate the conduct of the governor. In the courſe of this inveſtigation ſeveral propoſitions and meſſages were tranſmitted to his lordſhip, the purport of which was, that he ſhould return to Williamſburg, to give his aſſent to ſeveral bills; replace the powder he had removed from the magazine; and depoſit an additional quantity of military ſtores for the uſe of the colony. To theſe propoſitions his lordſhip returned for anſwer, that, as his ſuſpicions relative to his perſonal ſafety were by no means allayed, he could not return to Williamſburg, but that if the council and aſſembly choſe to bring the bills to him, he would give his aſſent to them. With reſpect to the powder, the colony had no right to claim it, becauſe it belonged to the Rippon man of war. To the laſt propoſition his lordſhip returned no anſwer. Immediately

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ately on receiving this determination, the aſſembly entered the following reſolution on their journals; viz. "That their rights and "privileges had been invaded; that the conſtitution of the colony "was in danger; and that preparation ought to be made accord-"ingly." Having paſſed this reſolution, both houſes adjourned to October.

The greateſt part of the members having now retired to their plantations, and tumult and diſorder having ſomewhat ſubſided, lord Dunmore, with ſeveral officers of the Fowey, ventured to a farm belonging to his lordſhip on the banks of York river, about two miles from Williamſburg. Many minutes, however, had not elapſed after their arrival, before intelligence was received of a party of riflemen being on their march to ſeize his lordſhip. He was therefore under the neceſſity of retreating immediately to the boats, which were ready to receive him. Several ſhot were fired at them, but happily they were at too great a diſtance to receive any injury. Lord Dunmore, now fully convinced that moderate meaſures would be feeble and ineffectual, diſpatched his lady and family in a ſchooner to England, and repaired immediately to Norfolk, a town advantageouſly ſituated at the mouth of Cheſapeak Bay. In the mean time, the colony proceeded to the election of deputies, who, on their meeting, aſſumed the appellation of the provincial convention. After juſtifying their conduct, by aſſerting that their liberties and poſſeſſions were endangered by the machinations of the mother-country, they increaſed the military eſtabliſhment, and impoſed taxes for the maintenance of it.

At this period the reſources poſſeſſed by lord Dunmore were very inadequate to oppoſe or counteract the proceedings of the convention. His lordſhip had ravaged thoſe parts which were contiguous to the ſhore, and had made an attempt to burn the town of Hampton. In this however, though well ſupported by the ſhipping, he was unſucceſsful. A body of riflemen coming to the aſſiſtance of the town, compelled him to retire with the loſs of one of his veſſels. In order to remedy this inſufficiency of reſources, his lordſhip adopted a meaſure which was certainly not very politic, and which ſtimulated the minds of the Virginians almoſt to a degree of phrenſy. He iſſued a proclamation, declaring martial law to be in force throughout the colony. He erected the royal ſtandard, to which he commanded his majeſty's ſubjects to repair, and he emancipated all the ſlaves who ſhould take up arms in defence of the Britiſh cauſe. By this means his lordſhip obtained a conſiderable increaſe of ſtrength, but far from adequate to his expectations. He had already ſecured the poſſeſſion of all the country ſituated between Norfolk and the ſea; when the provincial meeting, in order to prevent the deſertion of the ſlaves, and to arreſt his lordſhip in his career, reſolved to ſend a conſiderable force againſt him. About the beginning of November, a detachment, conſiſting of one thouſand men, was diſpatched from the weſtern ſide of Virginia to Norfolk, in the neighbourhood of which they arrived early in December. The river Elizabeth running between them and the town, they were under the neceſſity of making a circuit of ten miles to a village called the Great Bridge, where the river is fordable: Previouſly, however, to their arrival, the bridge had been removed, and ſome works thrown up, which were defended by a body of provincials and negroes, in order to impede their croſſing the river. Thus ſituated, and convinced that the loyaliſts would ſoon be obliged to abandon their poſt, the Americans contented themſelves with intrenching on the oppoſite ſide of the river. Lord Dunmore, though he poſſeſſed a conſiderable degree of military experience, was impetuous and impatient. He reſolved to adopt a ſcheme which was certainly not defenſible on the grounds of prudence, and which was far from receiving the approbation of thoſe who were under his command. The ſcheme was, to attempt to diſlodge the enemy from

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their intrenchments on the other ſide of the river. On the eighth of December a detachment of one hundred and twenty men, under the command of captain Fordyce of the fourteenth regiment, a brave officer, departed from Norfolk at midnight, and arrived at the Great Bridge before day-break. The planks of the bridge were replaced as ſilently as poſſible, and every proper diſpoſition made for the attack. The Americans, however, appriſed of the ſcheme, had prepared themſelves accordingly. A cauſway extended from the bridge through a ſwampy bottom, almoſt as far as the enemy's works, which were ſituated on a riſing ground. The right ſide of this cauſway was ſkirted by a thicket, within the diſtance of muſket-ſhot. At break of day captain Fordyce croſſing the bridge proceeded along the cauſway, and was ſuffered to advance very near the intrenchments without oppoſition. A heavy fire was then poured at the ſame moment upon him, both from the thicket and the works, which did great execution. Diſconcerted, but not daunted, he ſtill continued to advance. A ſecond diſcharge from the enemy proved fatal to him. He fell within a few feet of the breaſt-work of the intrenchments. Thirty of the hundred and twenty, including the leader, being now killed or wounded, the detachment retreated from the attack, and retired acroſs the bridge.

On the ſucceeding night, the Engliſh abandoned their poſt between the Elizabeth and Norfolk, which laſt place it was thought prudent alſo to relinquiſh, on account of the increaſing ſtrength of the Americans. Lord Dunmore therefore, with ſuch of the inhabitants as were attached to the Britiſh cauſe, retired on board the ſhipping in the river, and the Americans took poſſeſſion of the town.

The loyaliſts were now in the moſt pitiable ſituation: Proviſions were ſcarce, and ſuch of the boats as ventured on ſhore to obtain a freſh ſupply, were in the moſt imminent danger from the riflemen, who had taken poſſeſſion of the wharfs, which projected a great way into the river. To remedy this inconvenience, it was reſolved by lord Dunmore to ſet theſe wharfs on fire. This was performed accordingly, on the firſt of January 1776. The other parts of the town were at the ſame time ſet on fire by the Americans; and thus was the town of Norfolk levelled with the duſt. Norfolk, at the commencement of the diſturbances, was one of the moſt flouriſhing towns on the ſhores of the Cheſapeak. It contained eight thouſand inhabitants. Its proximity to the ſea, the excellence of the timber that grew in abundance near it, the capacioufneſs and ſafety of its harbour, and the ſalubrity of its ſituation, had rendered it the moſt deſirable place of reſidence in the extenſive province of Virginia. The damage computed to be done by the deſtruction of this place was near four hundred thouſand pounds.

After the conflagration of Norfolk, the Americans, in order to prevent the ſhipping from procuring proviſions, deſtroyed all the plantations contiguous to the river, forcing the poſſeſſors of them to remove with their effects into the interior parts of the province. Experiencing now the greateſt diſtreſs, the ſhips were obliged to put to ſea, and lord Dunmore, leaving a conſiderable body of the loyaliſts and negroes who had joined the royal ſtandard, proceeded with the remains of his army to New York, and joined the army under the command of general Howe.

In ſtating the ſituation of affairs in Virginia at this period, it may not be thought anomalous to mention the particulars of an enlarged and daring ſcheme that was projected by a Mr. Connelly, a native of Penſylvania, and communicated to lord Dunmore while he was on the coaſt of Virginia. The plan was, to invade that and the other ſouthern colonies on their back and inland parts, where it was known that the people were ſtrongly attached to the Britiſh government. Theſe, it was not doubted, would take up arms in its defence; and it was alſo ſuppoſed that ſeveral of the Indian tribes might be induced

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to join them. With this force it was intended to open a paſſage into the very heart of the colonies. The projector, Mr. Connelly, was peculiarly fitted for the conduct of ſuch an enterpriſe. He was active, enterpriſing, patient of fatigue, and he poſſeſſed that which is the ſoul of enterpriſe, unconquerable perſeverance.

The ſcheme having received the approbation of lord Dunmore, was immediately put into execution. Notwithſtanding the variety of difficulties and dangers that ſurrounded him, Mr. Connelly traverſed the province of Virginia from Cheſapeak Bay to the Ohio, a journey of between three and four hundred miles, negotiated a treaty with the Indians on that river, and brought over to his purpoſe the white people ſituated in thoſe diſtant ſettlements. Returning to lord Dunmore, he was immediately diſpatched to general Gage, who appointed him leader of the enterpriſe, and promiſed him his countenance and ſupport.

It was determined that Mr. Connelly, as early as poſſible in the enſuing ſpring, ſhould collect as many men as Detroit and the neighbouring forts could ſpare, and proceed with them to Pittſburg, ſituated beyond the Allegany mountains, where he was to remain until he had procured a ſufficient number of perſons attached to the Britiſh cauſe. He was then to croſs the Allegany mountains, and penetrate into Virginia: Then leaving a ſtrong garriſon at Fort Cumberland, he was to ſail down the river Potomack, and ſeize upon Alexandria, where lord Dunmore was to join him with as many ſhips as poſſible. Strong fortifications were immediately to be conſtructed, in order that at all times the friends of government might declare themſelves and form a junction, and that all communication might thus be cut off between the northern and ſouthern colonies, divided from each other by the Potomack, which ſtretches from an arm of Cheſapeak Bay to the Allegany mountains. It is broad, rapid, and not eaſily to be forded. The only town of any conſequence on its banks was Alexandria, equidiſtantly ſituated between the ſea and the Allegany mountains. But the ſcheme was fruſtrated by one of thoſe cauſes which, trifling as they appear, produce often the moſt important effects.

Already had Mr. Connelly penetrated to the back ſettlements of Maryland, and had congratulated himſelf on having fortunately eſcaped almoſt every danger, when a tradeſman, who knew him, met him on the road, and immediately communicated his ſuſpicions to the neareſt committee. In conſequence of this information, he was ſeized, thrown into priſon, his papers taken from him, and tranſmitted to congreſs. Theſe diſcovered the whole ſcheme, which was thus entirely overthrown ; Mr. Connelly was ſent priſoner to Philadelphia, where he was put in irons, and treated with the moſt rigorous ſeverity.

In North Carolina,

While lord Dunmore was thus driven from his government of Virginia, the governor of North Carolina, Mr. Martin, was not more peaceably ſituated. The ſame complaints were advanced againſt him as had been adduced againſt his lordſhip, viz. of having attempted to ſtir up the negroes againſt their maſters. The replication of Mr. Martin, couched in the form of a proclamation, was ſo ſpirited and ſevere, that the provincial convention voted it to be a moſt outrageous libel, and ordered it to be burnt by the public executioner.

Ten or twelve pieces of old diſmounted cannon, which had been for many years uſed only on joyful occaſions, lay on the banks of the river near governor Martin's houſe at Newburn. On the firſt of June 1775, the governor's ſervants being employed in examining them (probably for the purpoſe of uſing them on his majeſty's birth-day), were obſerved by the malcontents, who ſpreading the alarm, the inhabitants immediately aſſembled, choſe a perſon of the name of Naſh for their ſpeaker, and went in a body to the governor's houſe. On being aſked what he meant to do with the guns, he replied, that they belonged to his majeſty, and that he ſhould uſe them in any manner he pleaſed. This firm reply ſomewhat daunted the malcontents, and they retired without continuing the inquiry relative to the guns. Newburn, where Mr. Martin reſided, was ſituated in ſuch a manner, that it could derive no aſſiſtance from the navy. On this account, and intelligence having been received that the malcontents had embodied themſelves, the governor thought it moſt prudent to retire on board a ſhip off Cape Fear. Similar diſturbances aroſe about the ſame time in South Carolina, the inhabitants of which compelled lord William Campbell, the governor, to retire on board a man of war.

and in South Carolina.

As ſoon as his lordſhip had departed, proper meaſures were uſed to prevent an invaſion from the inhabitants of the back ſettlements, by concluding a treaty with them, and to put the province in an adequate ſtate of defence.

At Boſton no events of importance occurred at this period, except the reſignation of general Gage, who departed for England, leaving the command of the Britiſh forces to general Howe. The beſiegers of Boſton, and the beſieged, remained in a ſituation of equal inactivity.

CHAP. IV.

Proceedings of the Britiſh government—Deputies arrive in London from Congreſs—State of Commerce—Meeting of Parliament—Effect of its Reſolutions in the Colonies.

Deputies arrive in London from Congreſs.

ABOUT the latter end of Auguſt, two deputies from congreſs, Meſſrs. Richard Penn and Arthur Lee, arrived in London with a petition, which they were ordered to preſent to his majeſty. The petition pointed out the flouriſhing ſtate of the colonies previous to the preſent diſturbances, and reminded his majeſty of the aſſiſtance they had afforded him during the continuance of the late glorious war. As a recompenſe for this aſſiſtance, it had been expected that they would have been permitted, with the reſt of the empire, to ſhare in the bleſſings of peace, and the emoluments of victory and conqueſt. How were they diſappointed, when, in place of this reward, a new ſyſtem of ſtatutes and regulations was adopted for the adminiſtration of the colonies, equally injurious to their proſperity, and to the welfare of the mother-country? The petition then animadverted in a pointed manner on the conduct of his majeſty's miniſters, who, by perſevering in their obnoxious ſyſtem, and by proceeding to open hoſtilities in order to enforce it, had compelled them to arm in their own defence. But as they were not ignorant of the conſequences of civil diſcords, they thought themſelves required by indiſpenſable obligations to Almighty God, to his majeſty, to their fellow-ſubjects, and themſelves, to ſtop the further effuſion of blood. After expreſſions of duty and attachment to his majeſty, they ſolemnly aſſured him, that they not only moſt ardently deſired that the former harmony between Great Britain and her colonies might be reſtored, but that concord might be eſtabliſhed between them upon ſo firm a baſis as to perpetuate its bleſſings, uninterrupted by any future diſſenſions, to ſucceeding generations in both countries. But this reconciliation they did not wiſh to procure at the expenſe either of the dignity or welfare of the mother-country. In concluſion, it was earneſtly recommended to his majeſty, to direct the adoption of ſome mode which ſhould have for its tendency the repeal of thoſe ſtatutes that were injurious to the intereſts of the colonies.

Such were the particulars of this celebrated petition, which was ſigned by John Hancock, preſident of the congreſs, and every one of the members. On the firſt of September it was delivered to lord Dartmouth, and on the fourth of the ſame month, Meſſrs. Penn and Lee were informed, " That no anſwer would be given to it."

The fate of this petition, and the acrimony of argument uſed by thoſe who ſupported and thoſe who oppoſed it, revived that party diſtinction of Whig and Tory, which had been dormant ſince the reign of queen Ann.

State of commerce.

Hitherto the commercial part of the nation had experienced but trifling inconveniences from the loſs of the trade to America: For the Americans had tranſmitted large ſums to diſcharge the debts due to their Engliſh correſpondents. Demands for goods to a conſiderable amount were alſo received from Turkey and Ruſſia; and Great Britain herſelf, by contracts and ſupplies for the army and navy, prevented commerce from drooping, on account of the deprivation of a free intercourſe with her colonies. But in the middle of the year, however, the trading part of the nation received a ſevere and an unexpected blow. The profits derived from the Newfoundland fiſhery are, in the knowledge of every one, immenſe. The uſual number of veſſels were ſent this year to the banks of Newfoundland, where, on their arrival, they found themſelves unable to proceed in their operations, on account of a decree made by congreſs, which prevented their being ſupplied with their former neceſſaries. This decree owed its origin to the act paſſed by Great Britain, for depriving the people of New England of the benefits of the fiſhery at Newfoundland. In conſequence of this prohibition moſt of the ſhips, in order to avoid the miſeries of famine, made the beſt of their way home; and the decreaſe in the profits of this branch of commerce this ſeaſon, was computed at very little leſs than half a million. This was a ſevere ſtroke which, while it afforded the oppoſers of the American war additional arguments againſt it, increaſed the anger of thoſe who conſidered the inhabitants of the colonies in no other light than that of rebels.

Meeting of parliament.

On the twenty-ſixth of October, the ſeſſion of parliament was opened with a ſpeech from the throne, in which his majeſty ſtated that the ſituation of America was the cauſe of his aſſembling both houſes of parliament ſo early. Adverting to the particulars of this ſituation, he declared, that his revolted ſubjects had raiſed troops; aſſembled a naval armament; ſeized the public revenue; aſſumed legiſlative, executive, and judicial powers, which they exerciſed in the moſt deſpotic manner over their fellow-ſubjects. Till they had arrived at this poſſeſſion of power, they had endeavoured to deceive and amuſe the mother-country by vague expreſſions of attachment to her, and of proteſtations of loyalty to her ſovereign. His majeſty next reminded each houſe, that though it was known laſt ſeſſion that a rebellion exiſted within the province of Maſſachuſet, yet even that ſingle province it was endeavoured rather to reclaim than ſubdue. The ſame mode of conduct had been purſued with reſpect to the other revolted colonies, and though certainly proper meaſures were taken to enforce authority, yet, at the ſame time, concilitary propoſitions had always preceded thoſe coercive meaſures. America, however, had rejected all theſe propoſitions, and prepared herſelf to oppoſe force by force. Hence it was viſible, that ſhe aimed at the eſtabliſhment of a ſeparate government, and an independent empire. After pointing out the injurious conſequences that would enſue to the parent ſtate from the ſucceſs of ſuch a plan, his majeſty declared that it was abſolutely neceſſary to adopt the moſt deciſive meaſures. Under the impreſſion of this idea, he informed both houſes that he had increaſed the naval and military eſtabliſhments, and that he had it in contemplation to engage ſome foreign troops offered him. Nevertheleſs he aſſured them that he ſhould be ready to receive the miſled with tenderneſs and mercy, whenever they ſhould become ſenſible of their error. In concluſion, the parliament was informed, that the proper eſtimates for the neceſſary ſupplies were ordered to be ſubmitted to their conſideration.

In anſwer to this ſpeech, the miniſtry propoſed that an addreſs ſhould be preſented to his majeſty, aſſuring him that both houſes concurred in admitting the neceſſity of adopting vigorous meaſures againſt the colonies; and that they would aſſiſt him with ſupplies neceſſary to carry ſuch meaſures into effect. This propoſition met with ſevere and violent oppoſition; and inſtead of ſuch an addreſs, it was moved by a member in the minority, that a declaration ſhould be adopted, the purport of which ſhould be, that the parliament were convinced that the means which had been adopted to allay the ferment in the colonies, had rather increaſed it: From which they were led to ſuppoſe that thoſe means were not properly adapted to ſecure the end propoſed: That they were ſatisfied that the preſent diſturbances originated in the want of adequate information relative to the true ſtate of the colonies, which had been the cauſe of obnoxious meaſures having hitherto been carried into execution. The

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declaration then proceeded to aſſure his majeſty that his parliament would proceed to review, in a moſt ſolemn manner, the whole of the late proceedings, in order to avoid the alarming neceſſity of ſhedding the blood of fellow-ſubjects, and the dreadful expedient of arming a Briton againſt a Briton. The miniſtry carried their point with reſpect to addreſſing his majeſty; but the above-mentioned declaration occaſioned long and important debates.

The arguments uſed by thoſe who ſupported the declaration, and oppoſed the adoption of coercive meaſures, were copiouſly anſwered by the ſupporters of government, who aſſerted that the repreſentations of the oppoſition were unfounded, and only calculated to intimidate and repreſs the national vigour and ſpirit. From the conduct of the Americans, it was abſurd and ridiculous to infer that they aimed at leſs than unconditional, unqualified, and total independence. In all their proceedings they had conſidered themſelves as entirely ſeparated from Great Britain; and though their profeſſions and petitions breathed peace and moderation, their actions and preparations denoted war and defence. Whether it was more wiſe to infer intentions from words than from deeds, remained with the oppoſition to determine. Every attempt that could be made to ſoften the coloniſts had been put in practice without effect. Their obſtinacy was inflexible, and in proportion as the parent ſtate acceded to their wiſhes, their conduct became more inſolent and overbearing. The right of taxation had in a manner been given up by parliament, for they had allowed the Americans the right of taxing themſelves. Yet with this permiſſion they were not contented, refuſing to contribute any thing towards the expenſes of that ſtate which had nurſed them with ſuch tenderneſs and foſtered them with ſuch care. Every hope of accommodation was now at an end. Only two alternatives remained for the Britiſh nation to adopt, coercion or contempt.

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To this effect were the arguments adduced in ſupport of the miniſtry. A whole night was ſpent in debating upon the royal ſpeech, and it was not till five o'clock in the morning that a diviſion took place, when the declaration propoſed by the oppoſition was rejected by a majority of one hundred and ſeventy; the numbers being, for it, one hundred and eight; againſt it, two hundred and ſeventy-eight.

The colonies in the mean time waited with anxious impatience for the determination of Great Britain. That hoſtilities were reſolved did not much ſurpriſe them, but the idea of having foreign troops employed againſt them ſtung them to the quick. They conſidered the adoption of this meaſure as an avowal of the mother-country having ſhaken off all former conſiderations, and of her having baniſhed from her memory every idea that reminded her of both having originated from the ſame ſource.

The conſequence of this indignation in the colonies may be eaſily conceived. Their reſolutions to oppoſe the meaſures of the mother-country were fortified more ſtrongly. Preparations were continued with additional eagerneſs and impetuoſity; and thoſe of the Americans who had wiſhed hitherto that moderate meaſures ſhould be adopted, felt no longer that inclination. And indeed, it muſt be confeſſed that the idea of introducing foreign troops was not reprobated ſolely by the Americans and the colonies: Many of the firm friends of the miniſter conceived it to be derogatory to the conſtitution, and contrary to law. Thus, though they acquieſced in the neceſſity of deciſive and vigorous meaſures, they abſolutely refuſed their aſſent to this propoſition, and refuſed him every aſſiſtance which it was in their power to give, either by their eloquence or their votes.

The miniſter however remained firm to his purpoſe. Hitherto, he ſaid, Great Britain had been unſucceſsful through delay. Immediate meaſures were to be uſed, and the ſupplies neceſſary to carry on the war ought to be tranſmitted to America as early as poſſible. That the introduction of foreigners was illegal he denied in the moſt poſitive manner, affirming it to have been adopted in times not very diſſimilar to the preſent, viz. in the rebellion of 1745. In the midſt of debates on this ſubject, the miniſtry received information from America that the inhabitants increaſed in ſtrength daily; that moſt vigorous preparations were carrying on both by ſea and land; and that they had made overtures to ſeveral foreign nations, who did not ſeem averſe to afford them every aſſiſtance and ſupport. In conſequence of this information, it was propoſed that the naval eſtabliſhment ſhould be augmented this year to twenty-eight thouſand men and eighty ſhips; and that the military eſtabliſhment in America ſhould conſiſt of twenty-five thouſand of the flower of the Engliſh forces. This propoſal was condemned by the oppoſition, who tried their ſtrength a ſecond time in moving, with a view to render ſuch warlike operations no longer neceſſary, an addreſs to his majeſty, requeſting him to authoriſe the commiſſioners alluded to in his ſpeech from the throne, to receive conciliatory propoſitions from congreſs, or any collective body that ſhould be formed to convey the ſentiments of one or more of the colonies, without inquiring into the legality of ſuch an aſſembly, or the forms under which they might be diſpoſed to treat. This condeſcenſion, it was ſtrongly inſiſted, would ſmooth the way to conſequences moſt beneficial and advantageous to the mother-country. Nor were condeſcenſions of this nature uncommon. Monarchs, wiſely conſidering that formal diſtinctions fade away before ſubſtantial powers, had often treated with their ſubjects who had aſſembled without any legality of form. John offered no objection to the informality of the barons' aſſembly; and ſubſequent monarchs, deriving no claim to the crown from lineal deſcent, had owed it ſolely to the will of a popular aſſembly. Beſides,

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Beſides, it was contended, that if forms had always been attended to, none of thoſe revolutions which have contributed to the happineſs of mankind, and the advancement of arts and ſciences, would have been accompliſhed. Prudent policy always accommodated itſelf to the exigencies of events.

The miniſterial party, in replying to theſe arguments, agreed that peace and reconciliation were generally preferable to war and oppoſition; but, at the ſame time, that there were circumſtances which rendered the former even more deſirable than the latter. Great Britain had ſufficiently receded. It was her duty now to advance. At all events it was totally inconſiſtent with her dignity and her character to acknowledge the congreſs to be a legal aſſembly. After every poſſible argument had been marſhalled on each ſide, the propoſal made by oppoſition was negatived, and the miniſter carried his point.

Indiſpenſable buſineſs had hitherto prevented any formal notice being taken of the petition preſented to his majeſty by the deputies from congreſs, in either houſe of parliament. At length however a copy of it having been laid before the houſe of lords, a motion was made that Mr. Penn ſhould be examined at the bar of the houſe relative to its contents. In order to induce the miniſtry to comply with this motion, it was ſtated that Mr. Penn, who had been formerly governor of Penſylvania, was well acquainted with the real intereſts of the colonies, and could communicate ſuch information to the houſe as would tend, perhaps, to heal the breach between the contending powers: Beſides, he was perſonally acquainted with every member of the congreſs. To this motion the miniſtry acceded, and Mr. Penn was examined. In his examination he poſitively, and in the moſt explicit terms, denied the charge brought againſt the Americans, viz. that they aimed at independence. Congreſs had not been elected in any other manner than what was warranted by the conſtitution of Great Britain They were choſen by the voice of their conſtituents, and entruſted by them with almoſt unlimited power. With a view to determine what number of men would be ſufficient for carrying on the war, he was particularly queſtioned relative to the population of Penſylvania. This he repreſented to have increaſed ſo much, during a very ſhort period, as to afford a militia of ſixty thouſand men. Of theſe, twenty thouſand, before his departure, had attached themſelves to the common cauſe, arming themſelves at their own expence, and receiving no pay for their ſervices. Congreſs had purchaſed in abundance materials for iron cannon, which they had already caſt at Philadelphia, as well as ſmall-arms, fully adequate to preſent and future exigencies. He likewiſe ſtated that ſanguine hopes were entertained of the ſucceſs of the petition he had brought over; ſo ſanguine indeed, that it was called the olive-branch. The conſequences of the rejection of it he feared would be fatal. The moſt vigorous preparations would be adopted; and he had every reaſon to ſuppoſe that the Americans would not want the aſſiſtance of foreign powers poſſeſſed of ample reſources. Such was the effect of Mr. Penn's examination, and ſo ſatisfied were the oppoſition with the information it contained, that a motion was immediately made for declaring that the petition from the continental congreſs to the king, afforded ſufficient ground for reconciling the unhappy differences ſubſiſting between Great Britain and her colonial poſſeſſions. Though the oppoſition however were ſatisfied with Mr. Penn's evidence, it muſt be confeſſed that that gentleman had overſtated ſeveral circumſtances. It cannot be denied that the object of the Americans, from the commencement of the diſturbances, was unqualified independence. It is alſo true that congreſs had not been choſen by more than one third of the people, and that the militia did not amount to above half the number at which Mr. Penn had ſtated it. In debating on the motion made by the oppoſition, various arguments were adduced on each ſide. The blood that would be ſhed, the treaſures that would be waſted by proceeding to hoſtilities, were again inſiſted on and again anſwered by the miniſterial party, with the arguments of the duplicity and deceit of congreſs; the contradiction that exiſted between their words and their actions, their profeſſions and their preparations; and the obſtinacy with which they had rejected every propoſition that Great Britain had found it conſiſtent with her dignity to offer.

After a long debate the houſe divided, and the motion in favour of the petition was rejected by a majority of fifty-three.

Mr. Burke's conciliatory bill.

Much about the ſame period Mr. Burke, who at that time patronized the republican principles, and maintained an intimate correſpondence with the prime movers of the revolution in America, brought forward a bill in the houſe of commons, which, on account of its tendency, was called the conciliatory bill. It reprobated every idea of a war that propoſed for its ultimate object either conqueſt or treaty; and it propoſed peace and immediate conceſſion. In order that ſuch a meaſure might not wear the appearance of innovation, the bill was modelled on a ſtatute made in the thirty-fifth year of Edward the Firſt. The neceſſity which occaſioned that ſtatute to be framed was ſimilar to the exigencies of the preſent times. It originated in a diſpute between that monarch and his people relative to taxation. The latter were victorious; obtaining this important privilege, that no taxes ſhould be impoſed on them without the conſent of the parliament. The preſent bill was intended to procure a ſimilar advantage for the Americans. On this account the bill, in the firſt place, renounced the exerciſe of taxation, waving the conſideration of the queſtion of right. Great Britain however reſerved to herſelf the power of levying commercial duties, which were to be applied to thoſe purpoſes that the general aſſembly of each province ſhould judge to be moſt ſalutary and beneficial. The mother-country alſo reſerved to herſelf the power of aſſembling the colonies in congreſs. The bill then propoſed to repeal all the laws complained of by the Americans, and to paſs an immediate act of amneſty.

Againſt the proviſions of this bill it was objected, that though they gave too much away from Great Britain, they would not ſatisfy the demands of America: That after what had been propoſed by his majeſty, any other conciliatory plan would be diſreſpectful to him; and that, finally, nothing now remained for Great Britain but coercion. After an important debate, in which both ſides diſplayed uncommon abilities and eloquence, the bill was rejected, two hundred and ten dividing againſt it, and one hundred and five for it.

The prohibitory bill.

The rejection of this bill was immediately followed by the introduction of a prohibitory bill, to reſtrain all intercourſe with the colonies. This paſſed both houſes, not however without violent oppoſition. Notwithſtanding the fate of Mr. Burke's propoſition, another conciliatory bill was ſubmitted to the conſideration of the lower houſe by Mr. Hartley. The end propoſed to be attained by it was the ſame as that intended by Mr. Burke's bill, but the means were varied. It propoſed that hoſtilities ſhould be immediately ſuſpended, and that the colonies ſhould be enjoined to eſtabliſh a trial by jury in favour of their ſlaves in criminal caſes. If they complied with this injunction, all the obnoxious laws ſince the year 1763 were immediately to be repealed, and an act of indemnity paſſed. Subſequently to the adoption of theſe meaſures the colonies were to be required to furniſh only thoſe ſupplies which were neceſſary for their own ſupport and defence. The ſame anſwer was given to this propoſition by the miniſtry, as had been before given to Mr. Burke's bill; and it met with the ſame fate.

Mr. Hartley's conciliatory bill.

Petition from Nova Scotia.

In conſequence of the conciliatory propoſition agreed to laſt ſeſſion of parliament, the colony of Nova Scotia tranſmitted, about this

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period, a petition to government, the contents of which were, that a revenue ſhould be raiſed in that colony, under the direction of Great Britain: The manner in which this revenue was to be raiſed, was by a ſtipulated ſum in the hundred on the importation of foreign goods. The petition was granted, and all the other taxes and duties, except thoſe which regarded commerce, were, in conſequence, immediately repealed.

Foreign troops.

About the latter end of February 1776, the miniſter ſubmitted to the conſideration of both houſes that part of his majeſty's ſpeech which related to the engagement of foreign troops. The meaſure was oppoſed with the united abilities and eloquence of oppoſition; nevertheleſs, after ſeveral debates, it was carried by the miniſter, in the houſe of peers, by a majority of ſixty-eight, and in the houſe of commons by a majority of one hundred and fifty-four.

Conciliatory motion by the duke of Grafton.

Though oppoſition had hitherto been unſucceſsful in every conciliatory propoſition, another attempt was made to put a period to the differences between Great Britain and her colonies, by the duke of Grafton, on the fourteenth of March. This nobleman, at the commencement of the diſturbances, poſſeſſed a ſhare in the adminiſtration, which he ſoon after reſigned in diſguſt. His grace moved that an addreſs ſhould be preſented to his majeſty, intreating him, in order to put an end to the effuſion of blood and treaſure, and to evince to the world the wiſh of the ſovereign and the parliament to reſtore peace and tranquillity, to iſſue a proclamation, declaring that, if the revolted colonies would preſent a petition to the commander in chief of his majeſty's forces in America, or to the commiſſioners ſent out with powers adequate to the purpoſes of making peace or war, ſetting forth their grievances, hoſtilities ſhould be immediately ſuſpended, and the petition ſhould be referred to the parliament, by whom it ſhould be conſidered with the moſt ſolemn and ſerious attention. In order to ſtrengthen this propoſition, it was alleged that the Americans would immediately be joined by foreign powers; for, from undoubted authority, it was known that two French gentlemen had been diſpatched to America, where, on their arrival, they had inſtantly repaired to congreſs. In reply to the aſſertions of the oppoſition, it was alleged that no dependence could be placed on the aſſurances of the coloniſts with reſpect to peace: That they had never diſcuſſed any terms of pacification, and that they ſeemed to think that the mother-country either poſſeſſed not ſufficient power to compel them to obedience, or that, if her abilities were adequate to ſuch a taſk, ſhe was afraid to exert them. On this account therefore it was abſolutely neceſſary that the colonies ſhould be convinced of their error; and that government ſhould no longer, by delay, furniſh them with an opportunity of accompliſhing their preparations, and completing their hoſtile intentions. With regard to the intimation of their receiving aſſiſtance from foreign powers, that was only vague and uncertain; for nothing had yet tranſpired relative to the buſineſs which had conveyed the two French gentlemen to America. But granting even that the ſuggeſtions held out by oppoſition, on this head, were true, they afforded only an argument for immediate and vigorous preparations.

The debate on the duke of Grafton's motion was long and violent. It was at length negatived by a majority of ſixty; and thus ended all attempts to reconcile the unhappy diſſenſions between the two contending powers.

CHAP. V.

Blockade and Evacuation of Boſton—Siege of Quebec—Defeat of Loyaliſts at Moore's Creek—Attack of Charleſtown.—1776.

CHAP. V. 1776.

Blockade of Boſton.

WHILE Great Britain was engaged in theſe parliamentary diſcuſſions, the Britiſh troops blockaded in Boſton ſuffered incredible hardſhips and fatigue. They had been cloſely inveſted ever ſince the affair at Lexington; proviſions were ſcarce; and though they ſent to the Weſt Indies for a freſh ſupply, they could not obtain any, on account of the dearth ſubſiſting in that quarter. In addition to theſe hardſhips, general Waſhington began to proſecute the ſiege with redoubled vigour, in order that the place might be captured before the arrival of reinforcements from Great Britain.

On the ſecond of March 1776, a battery was opened on the weſtern ſide of the town, whence it was dreadfully annoyed by a furious diſcharge of cannon and bombs; and on the fifth another was opened on the eaſtern ſhore: Nevertheleſs the Britiſh troops acquitted themſelves with the moſt ſurpriſing fortitude, and for fourteen days endured this bombardment with the moſt undaunted courage.

No alternative remained now for the beſieged, but to diſlodge the provincials from their new works, or evacuate the town. To ſucceed in the former was impoſſible, for the Britiſh troops muſt have aſcended an almoſt perpendicular eminence, on the top of which the Americans had prepared hogſheads chained together in great numbers, and filled with ſtones, to roll down upon them as they marched up: A curious proviſion, by which whole columns would have been ſwept off at once. This ſpecies of preparation will exemplify, in a ſtriking manner, that fertility of genius in expedients, which ſtrongly characterized the Americans during the war. This would effectually have deſtroyed all order, and have broken the ranks. It was therefore determined to evacuate the town: This meaſure required a fortnight to carry it into execution, on account of the numbers to be removed, many of whom were ſick and wounded. At length, however, it was effected, and the brave garriſon, with thoſe attached to the Britiſh cauſe, in number about two thouſand, embarked for Halifax in Nova Scotia, where, on account of the favourableneſs of the weather, they ſoon arrived *. Thus was the capital of Maſſachuſet added to the American cauſe.

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* The Britiſh troops left behind them at the Caſtle-Iſland and at Boſton, 250 pieces of cannon, half of which were ſerviceable, 4 thirteen and a half inch mortars, 2500 chaldrons of ſea-coal, 25,000 buſhels of wheat, 2300 buſhels of barley, 600 buſhels of oats, 100 jars of oil, and 150 horſes. This large ſupply was of the utmoſt importance to the enemy, who were labouring under the greateſt want both of ſtores and proviſions. It ought not, however, to be omitted, that ſir William Howe might have carried with him the greateſt part of the ammunition, and all the proviſions; it may alſo be neceſſary to mention that the fortifications of Boſton were ſo excellent, that it would have been extremely difficult for the Americans to have forced them. The Britiſh troops left the houſes of Boſton in good condition, and in a ſtate of cleanlineſs, which was ſoon aboliſhed by the reſidence of the American troops. The evacuation of Boſton afforded alſo another moſt important advantage to the enemy. Many ſtore-ſhips from Great Britain conſigned to Boſton, and ignorant of the Britiſh troops having abandoned it, entered the harbour, and were of courſe captured; of theſe, the ſhip Hope was the moſt valuable—She had on board 1500 barrels of powder, beſides carbines, bayonets, travelling carriages for heavy cannon, and all ſorts of tools neceſſary for the army and artillery: Beſides theſe, there were other articles, thoſe of bedding and clothing particularly, of which the enemy ſtood greatly in need. Theſe goods ſir William Howe might have diſtributed among the army and navy, truſting to government to make payment to the individual proprietors. At any rate, they ſhould not have been left in Boſton, but have been deſtroyed, as they were articles of which the Americans ſtood in the greateſt need; and which enabled them to bear up under the ſeverities of that winter.

As ſoon as general Waſhington had taken poſſeſſion of the town, he detached ſeveral regiments to the defence of New York, imagining that the Britiſh troops might have departed for that place, on their ſeceſſion from Boſton.

Colonel Arnold, in the mean time, remained encamped near Quebec: Though unable to capture the town, he reduced it to great diſtreſs, on account of having cut off all communication between the inhabitants and the adjacent country. But the ſeaſon now approaching when reinforcements would arrive from England, he was under the neceſſity of recommencing the ſiege in due form. On the ſhores of the river St. Laurence, batteries were erected to burn the ſhipping. Theſe attempts, however, were unſucceſsful. While the attention of the beſieged was engaged in theſe endeavours on the ſhipping, Arnold had prepared ſcaling-ladders to ſtorm the town: The ſcheme was plauſible, but it failed in part: The Americans obtained admittance into the ſuburbs, where they burned ſeveral houſes, and compelled the garriſon to pull down the reſt, in order to prevent the fire from ſpreading. While the Americans were employed in this ſiege, the ſmall-pox broke out among them with great violence, and many of the ſoldiers deſerted, in order to ſave themſelves from the conſequences of a diſorder ſo fatal, and ſo much dreaded in that country. On this account, and certain that ſuccours would ſoon arrive from England, Arnold thought proper to retire. The Engliſh ſquadron, making its way through the ice, arrived unexpectedly before Quebec. Though, at the time when Boſton was evacuated, it was underſtood that this ſquadron, with reinforcements, were at ſea, no care was taken to leave a ſufficient force off the harbour, to prevent them from running into the throat of the enemy: In conſequence of which neglect, lieutenant-colonel Archibald Campbell, with ſeven hundred men, ran right into Boſton harbour, not knowing but that place was ſtill in our hands. He was treated in a cruel and ſavage manner *. Commu-

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* Copy of a letter from the late ſir Archibald Campbell to ſir William Howe.

"SIR, "*Concord Gaol*, 14*th February* 1777.

"SCARCE eight days had elapſed after the period of my firſt addreſs, when I found myſelf ſtripped of half my property, the very neceſſaries of life; and I have been lately informed that the ſide-arms of my officers have actually been diſpoſed of, notwithſtanding they were honourably reſtored to them by the captors. I was, however, ſent upon my parole of honour to Reading, where I reſided till the firſt of this month, during which time it was even beyond the power of malevolent aſperſion to charge my conduct juſtly with impropriety.

"On the firſt of February I was committed, by an order of congreſs, through the council of Boſton, to the common gaol of Concord, intimating for a reaſon, that your excellency had refuſed to exchange general Lee for ſix field officers (of whom I happened to be one), and that your excellency had put that officer under cuſtody of the provoſt. How far it may be conſiſtent to ill treat an officer becauſe his commander does not chuſe to accept of proffered barter of that nature, is left to reaſon and future conſequences to decide, eſpecially when it is conſidered, that there is no perſonal charge againſt that officer, and the public faith and honour of America was pledged for his being treated as a gentleman.

"With reſpect to your excellency's treatment of general Lee, I can ſcarcely think it ſimilar to mine; but that you may be able with more preciſion to decide on that point, I ſhall briefly ſtate my preſent unmerited condition.

"I am lodged in a dungeon of twelve or thirteen feet ſquare, whoſe ſides are black with the greaſe and litter of ſucceſſive criminals; two doors, with double locks and bolts, ſhut me up from the yard, with an expreſs prohibition to enter it, either for my health or the neceſſary calls of nature: Two ſmall windows, ſtrongly grated with iron, introduce a gloomy light to the apartment, and theſe are at this time without a ſingle pane of glaſs, although the ſeaſon of the froſt and ſnow is actually in the extreme. In the corner of the cell, boxed up with the partition, ſtands a neceſſary-houſe, which does not ſeem to have been emptied ſince its firſt appropriation to this convenience of malefactors. A loathſome black-hole, decorated with a pair of fixed chains, is granted me for my inner apartment, from whence a felon was but the moment before removed, to make way for your humble ſervant, and in which his litter and excrement remain to this moment. The attendance of a ſingle ſervant is alſo denied me, and every viſit from a friend poſitively refuſed: In ſhort, ſir, was a fire to happen in any chamber of the gaol, which is all of wood, the chimney-ſtacks excepted, I might periſh in the flames before the gaoler could go through the ceremony of unbolting the doors; although, to do him juſtice in his ſtation, I really think him a man of humanity; his houſe is ſo remote, that any call from within, eſpecially if the wind is high, might be long of reaching him effectually.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL."

nication between the forces that lay on each ſide of the river was thus prevented, and Arnold found it impoſſible to put his intentions of the day before into execution.

On the ſixth of May 1776, the reinforcement being landed, general Carleton ſallied out upon the provincials, who fled with the utmoſt ſpeed, leaving behind them all their artillery and military ſtores. Their veſſels were at the ſame time attacked and taken by the light-armed veſſels of the Engliſh. Thus was the ſiege of Quebec raiſed, after a duration of five months. The priſoners taken by general Carleton were treated with the greateſt lenity; while, on the other hand, the Americans, by their miſconduct, entirely loſt the affections of the Canadians: A circumſtance to which we are in ſome meaſure to impute the failure of their deſigns.

Expedition againſt the Cedars.

Early in the ſpring of this year, an expedition, by command of ſir Guy Carleton, was undertaken againſt a place called the Cedars by captain Forſter, who commanded the poſt of Oſwagatchie. The Cedars is ſituated about thirty miles from Montreal, to the weſtward, on the river St. Laurence, about a mile from the Caſcade. This place is naturally ſtrong: On the ſouth the land ſtretches ſo far into the river as to render the eaſt and weſt points inacceſſible: The north part is the only one on which an attack can be made with any probability of ſucceſs.

11th May.

On the eleventh of May captain Forſter departed from Oſwagatchie with two lieutenants, thirty-eight privates, ten volunteers, and about one hundred and twenty Indians. Arriving on the fourteenth at the village of St. Regis, he convened a council of the warrior chiefs, and endeavoured to prevail on them to afford him their aſſiſtance in his intended expedition. The chiefs, who had been tampered with by the enemy, at firſt refuſed to accompany him, but at length permitted their young men. On the ſeventeenth of May, having received intelligence that the Americans, to the number of four hundred, were poſted at the church of the Cedars, but that they were ignorant of his expedition, he embarked his troops, and landed at ten o'clock at night at Point au Diable, a place about ſix miles from the Cedars. A party was immediately diſpatched to reconnoitre the ſituation of the enemy. On the eighteenth captain Forſter proceeded, under cover of a thick wood, within a mile of the fort, where he made the following diſpoſition: One company of privates, the volunteers, and one hundred Indians, were ordered to take poſſeſſion of the wood, and to penetrate it as near as poſſible to the enemy. Another body of one hundred Indians was at the ſame time diſpatched to the Falls at the entrance of the Caſcade, in order to cut off all communication with the iſland of Montreal. This body on their march fell in with a detachment of the garriſon, who were returning with proviſions from the Caſcade. At ſight of the Britiſh troops they fled to the fort, with the loſs of one man. This was the firſt certain intelligence received by the enemy of the approach of captain Forſter.

A flag of truce was then ſent to the fort, ordering the enemy to ſurrender themſelves priſoners of war. Major Butterfield, who commanded it, requeſted four hours conſideration. Conceiving that this requiſition originated only in a wiſh to gain time, and being informed that a colonel Biddel had been ſent to obtain a reinforcement from Montreal, captain Forſter ſent a ſecond flag, ſaying that the Indians were at preſent perfectly under his command, and that if the garriſon ſurrendered immediately, he had no doubt but that they would agree to any thing he wiſhed; but if the fort did not ſurrender, and any of the Indians ſhould be killed, captain Forſter could not anſwer for the conſequences. In reply to this requiſition, the commanding officer of the garriſon agreed to a ſurrender, on condition of being allowed to retire to Montreal. To this, captain Forſter would not conſent. In the evening of the eighteenth a redoubt was thrown up at the edge of the wood, within five hundred yards of the fort. In the morning of the nineteenth captain Forſter advanced within one hundred and twenty yards of the fort, and commenced a heavy fire of muſketry, which continued till twelve o'clock, when the fort was ſurrendered, on condition of the lives of the enemy being preſerved, and their baggage prevented from being plundered. In this attack one Indian was killed on the part of the Engliſh. The number of priſoners taken amounted, officers included, to three hundred and ninety *. On the twentieth of May, captain

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* Articles of Capitulation for ſurrendering the Cedars.

" After the matureſt deliberation on the cuſtoms and manners of the ſavages in war, which " I find ſo oppoſite and contrary to the humane diſpoſition of the Britiſh government, and to " all civilized nations, and to avoid the inevitable conſequence of the ſavages cuſtom in former " war (which by their threats and menaces I find is not changed), that of putting their pri- " ſoners to death, to diſencumber themſelves in caſe of their being attacked by their enemy; I " have therefore, in compliance with the above diſpoſition in government and the dictates of " humanity, thought fit to enter into the following articles of agreement with brigadier- " general Arnold, in the name of the power he is employed by, and of the officers and ſol- " diers who ſhall be releaſed by this agreement, whoſe rank and number ſhall be endorſed " on this cartel.

" 1ſt, That there ſhall be an exchange of priſoners faithfully made, returning an equal " number of his majeſty's troops of the ſame rank of thoſe releaſed by this agreement, as " ſoon as poſſible, within the ſpace of two months, allowing a moderate time for caſualties " that may render the performance of this article impracticable.

" 2d, That the priſoners ſhall be conducted with ſafety, and all poſſible convenience and " diſpatch that circumſtances will permit, to the ſouth ſhore of the river St. Laurence, from " which they are to repair to St. John, and return to their own countries immediately, with- " out committing any waſte or ſpoil on their march thither, allowing ten or twelve to go to " Montreal, to tranſact their private affairs.

" 3d, That the priſoners ſo returned ſhall not, under any pretext whatſoever, either in words, " writing, or ſigns, give the leaſt information to government enemies, or to their adherents " now in arms, in the leaſt prejudice to his majeſty's ſervice.

" 4th,

captain Forſter being informed that a party of the enemy were advancing from Montreal to the fort, ordered one hundred Indians to take poſſeſſion of the woods on both ſides of the road through which they were under the neceſſity of paſſing. This detachment ſoon fell in with a party of the enemy, which, after a ſhort conflict, in which one Indian was killed and three wounded, ſurrendered at diſcretion. The Indians immediately returned with their priſoners to the fort. On their arrival at the outſide of the works they halted, for the purpoſe of putting them to death. Captain Forſter however, by his ſpirited conduct, prevented them from putting this inhuman determination into execution, and, riſking the

"4th, That the batteaux, or other conveniencies made uſe of to tranſport the priſoners to "the ſouth ſhore of the ſaid river, or the neceſſary people to conduct them, ſhall return un-"moleſted.

"5th, That hoſtages be delivered, for the performance of articles to the full, according "to the ſenſe and ſpirit of the agreement, without any equivocation whatſoever.

"6th, That the ſecurity of the ſubſcribers be given to the inhabitants for all the waſte and "ſpoil committed by the detachment under colonel Biddel, on fair account atteſted and ſigned "being delivered, for which the hoſtages are not to be anſwerable.

"It being our full intention to fulfil the above articles, we mutually ſign and interchange "them as aſſurances of performance.

"Given under our hands this 27th day of May, A. D. 1776.

(Signed) "GEORGE FORSTER,
"At Vaudreuil. "Captain, commanding the king's troops."

"Article 2d, The priſoners ſhall be ſent to the ſouth ſhore of St. Laurence, within "one league of Caughnawaga, and from thence to St. John's to their own country, except "twelve who have liberty to go to Montreal, for which purpoſe ſix days ſhall be allowed, and "hoſtilities to ceaſe on both ſides.

"4th, Four captains ſhall be ſent to Quebec as hoſtages, and remain there until priſoners "are exchanged.

"6th, The continental troops, from principle, have ever avoided plundering. Upon proof "being made of any waſte committed by colonel Biddel's detachment, reparation ſhall be "made.

"Given under our hands this 27th day of May 1776.

(Signed) "B. ARNOLD,
"St. Ann's. "Brigadier-general of the continental troops."

ſafety of his own men, depoſited the priſoners in the fort, having ſatisfied his Indians by making them ſome preſents. On the ſucceeding day he advanced to Vaudreuil, ſituated about ſix miles to the northward of the Cedars. On the twenty-fourth of May, having received intelligence that the enemy, under colonel Arnold, had poſted themſelves at Laſhine, nine miles from Montreal, captain Forſter marched to attempt to diſlodge him from it. He had advanced within three miles of Laſhine, when he was informed that the number of the enemy amounted to ſix hundred, which would be increaſed to near treble that number on the ſucceeding day. On this account he thought it prudent to retire to Vaudreuil. On the twenty-ſixth of May colonel Arnold advanced up the river, with ſeven hundred men, to attack him. Captain Forſter immediately formed his men into three diviſions, which were placed on three points of land that ſtretched a little way into the river. The left point was occupied by the ſavages. The ground in that point was rather ſwampy, and covered with wood almoſt to the water's edge. The central point, which was open ground, was poſſeſſed by captain Forſter; and the right point, ſituated at the head of a dangerous rapid, was defended by a body of Canadians: Another body of Canadians was alſo ſituated on the iſle of Perrault, oppoſite to the right point. The enemy firſt made an attempt on the left point, but were repulſed. They next endeavoured to land in the central point, but were prevented. An attempt againſt the third point was attended with the ſame ſucceſs. The enemy therefore relinquiſhed their intentions, and returned to St. Ann's, on the iſland of Montreal. Captain Forſter finding himſelf now much encumbered by the number of his priſoners, and having received no intelligence of general Carleton's arrival at Trois Rivieres, judged it expedient to enter into an exchange of priſoners with colonel Arnold. This cartel was afterwards broken by congreſs, on a pretence that captain Forſter had conducted himſelf towards the priſoners taken at the Cedars in a cruel and inhuman manner. This pretence however, it ſhould be mentioned in juſtice to captain Forſter, had not the ſmalleſt foundation. And in confirmation of the aſſertion, and of captain Forſter's humanity, captain Sullivan, who had been taken priſoner, in a letter to his brother general Sullivan, expreſſed his ſurpriſe at hearing that congreſs, inſtead of redeeming him and the other hoſtages, according to the cartel, had demanded captain Forſter to be delivered up. At the ſame time he declared, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that no man could behave with more humanity than that gentleman did after the ſurrender of the party to which he belonged *.

General

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* Letter from E. Sullivan to major-general John Sullivan, member of congreſs.

" Dear Sir, *Mont. ea'. Aug.* 4, 1776.

" I am permitted by his excellency, which is a favour I did not expect to obtain, to inform " you I am well, as are the hoſtages that are with me. I am much ſurpriſed to hear that the " congreſs, inſtead of redeeming us according to the cartel, have not only refuſed to do it, " but have demanded captain Forſter to be delivered up to anſwer his conduct in what they " are pleaſed to term the maſſacre at the Cedars. I would fain flatter myſelf that the con" greſs would never have thought of ſuch unheard-of proceedings, had they not had a falſe " repreſentation of the matter. I do not think that I am under any reſtraint when I ſay, " and call *that* God who muſt judge of all things to witneſs, that not a man living could have " uſed more humanity than captain Forſter did after the ſurrender of the party I belonged to; " and whoever ſays to the contrary, let his ſtation in life be what it will, he is an enemy to " peace, and a fallacious diſturber of mankind. What reaſon they can give for not redeem" ing us I cannot conceive; if they are wrongly informed that the affair of the Cedars was a " maſſacre, why do not they rather fulfil the cartel than let their hoſtages remain in the hands " of a mercileſs enemy; or do they regard their troops only while the heavens make them " victorious?

" Were we in the hands of a rigorous power, as they would intimate, have they not " every colour of juſtice, after ſo enormous a breach of faith, laden with chains, to " caſt us into ſome horrid place, and tell us to languiſh out our days under a ſentence " paſſed by our own people? If they ſay that there is ſome hidden reaſon far beyond " the reach of policy to find out, for could they ſuppoſe it policy to diſtreſs his " majeſty's troops by retaining ſuch a number of men from them, it would not only " be the breach of their faith that would threaten them; for conſider the number of " priſoners already in the hands of the Britiſh army, and alſo conſider the chance of war

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CHAP. V.

1776.

General Carleton, now reinforced by an additional number of troops from England, haſtened to Trois Rivieres, ſituated half-way between Montreal and Quebec. That place, however, the Americans had deſerted, and retreated as far as the river Sorrel, a diſtance of one hundred and fifty miles. Here they halted, and were joined by reinforcements ſent by congreſs. On the ſtrength of theſe they reſolved to make an attempt on Trois Rivieres. On this expedition two thouſand men were diſpatched under the command of general Thomſon. Coaſting the lake St. Peter's on the ſouth ſide, they proceeded to the river Nicolet, which commences at the extremity of the lake, and diſcharges itſelf into the river St. Laurence. The banks of the Nicolet are covered with a thick wood. Here they remained all day. At night they croſſed over to a place called Point

The Americans attack Trois Rivieres.

" that may yet throw greater numbers into their hands. Will people reſt content when they " find their own rulers willing to let them remain priſoners in the hands of what they them- " ſelves term (though unjuſtly) a mercileſs people; or will they not, fired with reſentment for " ſuch inhuman treatment, take arms to ſuppreſs the power that regards them no longer than " while their blood is ſpilling in their ſervice? If this, which appears too probable, ſhould " happen, conſider whether thoſe perſons will not be followed by a number of their friends, " which muſt naturally make a great diviſion in the colonies. Then take a view of Grea " Britain and her allies pouring on you, and let the moſt ſanguine expecter in America there " judge how long the colonies, thus divided, can ſtand the fury of the combat. I know your " influence has been great, and for that reaſon have written, that you may, if poſſible, yet pre- " vent America from being branded with the name of injuſtice. If you ſuſpect I write this " for the ſake of getting my own liberty, your ſuſpicions wrong me; it is not my confine- " ment, but the breach of a treaty, which even ſavages have ever held ſacred, that cauſes me " to write.

" You will be ſo kind as to convey the incloſed to my wife, and if ever I had ſo much of " your love as to demand any favour of you, let this be the time I may implore your aſſiſtance " for my diſtreſſed wife and helpleſs orphans. May God grant that I may once more ſee them; " till when, " I am

(A true copy.) " Your affectionate brother,

" EBEN. SULLIVAN."

" To the hon. general John Sullivan, in Durham county,
" in New Hampſhire, near Portſmouth."

du Lac, where they landed, and immediately proceeded to Trois Rivieres. A Canadian peaſant, however, as ſoon as they had landed, haſtened before them to general Frazer at Trois Rivieres, to inform him of their operations. General Frazer immediately landed a body of troops and ſome field-pieces, and prepared to receive them. General Neſbit, at the ſame time, poſted his detachment in the enemy's rear, and effectually cut off a retreat by the common road, while major Grant taking poſſeſſion of the bridge, rendered their eſcape over the river De Loup impracticable.

Repulſed with great loſs.

On the arrival of the enemy at Trois Rivieres, a furious attack was commenced, which proved unſucceſsful. General Frazer repulſed them with great loſs; and their commander, general Thompſon, with about two hundred of his men, were taken priſoners. A large body, under the command of colonel Allen, who afterwards commanded a provincial regiment in his majeſty's ſervice, knowing that their retreat by the common road had been cut off, retired into a wood on their left, which was full of deep ſwamps. Here they remained in great diſtreſs till next day, when ſir Guy Carleton, who had arrived from Quebec, ordering major Grant to relinquiſh the poſſeſſion of the bridge over the river De Loup, they fortunately effected their eſcape. The enemy, however, were purſued by water, but for ſome unknown reaſon the purſuit was diſcontinued on the arrival of the Britiſh troops at Sorrel. It was generally believed that if, inſtead of coming to anchor, general Carleton had continued the purſuit, which he might have done, as the wind was as favourable as it could poſſibly be, he would undoubtedly have arrived at Chamblée ten or twelve hours before general Sullivan, who was encumbered with heavy cannon and baggage. In this caſe Sullivan would have been compelled to lay down his arms; general Arnold would have been intercepted at Montreal, where he remained till the ſixteenth of June;

and Ticonderoga, alſo, would have been taken, as no troops had been ſtationed there for its defence.

June.

General Burgoyne, who had arrived with the laſt reinforcements from England, now proceeded, in purſuit of the continental army, up the river to St. John's, but under orders from general ſir Guy Carleton, not to riſk an engagement, until he ſhould be ſuſtained by another column on his right, directed to proceed to Montreal. This great precaution of the commander in chief gave the Americans an opportunity of making their eſcape.

The Americans driven from Canada.

The Americans had now entirely quitted Canada, having in their retreat from Montreal and St. John's, croſſed the lake Champlain, and ſtationed themſelves at Crown Point; which poſt it was not judged expedient by the British commanders, at preſent, to attack.

Efforts on the ſide of the Britiſh government in North Carolina.

It has already been mentioned that Mr. Martin, governor of North Carolina, had been obliged to flee for ſhelter, like the governors of other provinces, to a ſhip. In this ſituation, however, he was not inactive: He had, by means of his emiſſaries, formed a junction between ſome Scotch emigrants, and a band of reſolute unruly men, called Regulators, who had long lived in a wandering ſtate of independence, their chief occupation being that of hunting. The command of theſe parties was given to the colonels Macdonald and Macleod, who, by the governor's direction, erected the king's ſtandard, to which he ſummoned all perſons to repair. This force was intended to act in conjunction with a body of troops expected early in the ſpring, which, however, did not arrive in time for co-operation. The Highlanders were to march down the northernmoſt branch of Cape Fear to Wilmington, a town about twenty-four miles from the Fork, where they were to be met by the king's troops, and ſuch veſſels of war, of eaſy draught of water, as could come up there: A plan which, if it had been adhered to, bid fair to ſecure the allegiance of the inhabitants of Cape Fear, and of conſequence extending more or leſs influence over the other parts of this province. In the mean time thoſe who had uſurped the government, directed that ſix regiments of continental troops ſhould be raiſed in North Carolina; one of which was to be ſtationed at Wilmington, under the command of colonel James Moore, a man of the moſt juſt fame in that part of the province, who had formerly been lieutenant-colonel of provincials, under his majeſty's government; a man of an active, humane, and gallant diſpoſition, but little acquainted with military operations. On the other hand, the loyaliſts were by no means inactive; a number of the inhabitants in the counties of Orange and Chatham, many of whom were formerly diſtinguiſhed by the name of Regulators, agreed to act in concert with the Highlanders: In conſequence of which, a council was formed of ſome of the leaders of the back-country men, and the chiefs of the Highlanders. The governor appointed Mr. Macdonald to the command, with the rank of brigadier-general, and gave a lieutenant-colonel's commiſſion to Mr. Macleod, who was to be ſecond in command. The other officers were nominated by the council, ſuch as were moſt agreeable to their leaders: It happened unfortunately, however, that general Clinton did not arrive as ſoon as was expected; and in the month of January 1776, it was neceſſary to embody the loyaliſts, as the only chance of keeping them ſteady in their intentions, and which was to take place on a certain day, at the town of Croſs Creek, which they had fixed upon as their head-quarters and place of rendezvous. Theſe operations, however ſecretly they were intended to be carried on, did not elude the vigilance of the popular leaders; and as ſoon as it was known that the loyaliſts were embodying, the continental regiment at Wilmington, and ſuch of the rebel militia as could be collected, were ordered to march under the command of colonel James Moore, to intercept their progreſs from Croſs Creek to Wilmington. The troops collected on this occaſion amounted to between eight and nine hundred, and they marched up the north-weſt of Cape Fear, without meeting any of the loyaliſts, who remained embodied at Croſs Creek. The rebel troops croſſed Rock-Fiſh, which is a creek with very high banks, and there is a bridge over its end, which is about ſix miles from Croſs Creek; upon the weſtern ſide of this bridge the rebels encamped, and remained there for three days, during which time nothing took place but meſſages by flags of truce, relative to ſuch perſons as were occaſionally taken priſoners by each party.

It unfortunately happened that there were great diviſions in the councils of the loyaliſts. That unanimity, neceſſary to vigorous and decided meaſures, was wanting; and it may be preſumed they did not mean to act offenſively, unleſs impelled to it by neceſſity; or otherwiſe the inſecure and unſoldierly poſition that the rebels had taken, which was with a deep moraſs and ſwamp on their left, the north-weſt river on their right, and the deep creek of Rock-Fiſh in their rear, added to the dread that at that period they entertained of the broad-ſword, as well as of the uſe the Highlanders had on former occaſions made of it, were circumſtances too inviting to be neglected by any who were in the leaſt acquainted with military operations.

The loyaliſts had certainly nothing elſe in view but to ſmuggle themſelves down to Wilmington, regardleſs of what force they left in the rear, provided they met none in front to oppoſe their progreſs; and, with this view, after waſting their time in fruitleſs intercourſe with the rebel party at Rock-Fiſh, they croſſed the north-weſt river at Cambleton and Gibſon's ferries, intending to proceed to Wilmington, through a neck of land thinly inhabited, which is called Black River Road, and ſeparated by that river and the north-weſt, and which leads to a place, ſituated on the conflux of the north-eaſt and north branches of Cape Fear, within half a mile of Wilmington, and called Negro-Head Point.

In the mean time, the embodying of the loyaliſts had ſpread abroad through the province; and as ſoon as colonel Moore's party had marched from Wilmington, a colonel Caſwell, who commanded one of the continental regiments in the neighbourhood of Newburn, collected about four or five hundred men, and with one two-pounder and two ſwivels marched to the north-weſt of Cape Fear, to act as occaſion might require. Colonel Caſwell, who was a ſenſible diſcerning man, and was reckoned one of the beſt woodſmen in the province, readily foreſaw that, if an engagement had taken place between the loyaliſts and rebel party on the north-weſt ſide of Cape Fear, that their route would be by the Black River Road; and for that purpoſe he marched to the road leading to Negro-Head Point, and croſſed Moore's Creek, which is about twelve miles from thence.

In order to arreſt the progreſs of the loyaliſts, at the ſame time, colonel Moore, finding that the loyaliſts had taken the other ſide of the river, returned with his troops the ſame way he went up, and croſſing at the lower ferries, on the north-weſt, effected a junction with colonel Caſwell, who was at that time encamped on the north ſide of Moore's Creek bridge. The loyaliſts had proceeded without interruption within half a mile of the rebel camp; and the night before they intended to attack it, they ſent a flag of truce, by way of getting intelligence of their ſituation, and which was nearly as hazardous a one, as that which colonel Moore had placed himſelf in at Rock-Fiſh; but the inſecurity of their poſition did not eſcape the vigilance of Mr. Caſwell; for as ſoon as night came on, he lighted up all his fires, which he left burning, in order to deceive the loyaliſts, retreated over Moore's Creek, took the planks off the bridge, and greaſed the ſleepers, which are only paſſable by one man at a time, and placed his men about fifty yards from the banks of the creek, behind trees, and ſuch little intrenchments as in the courſe of the night they were able to throw up.

The loyaliſts, on the other hand, fluſhed with the accounts that their flag of truce brought them, determined to attack the rebels in their camp the next morning; and accordingly colonel Macleod, who commanded the attack, ſeeing the fires in the rebel camp burning, and nobody there, concluded that the rebels had evacuated it through fear, and with about twenty-two of the Highlanders he got over the bridge, intending to attack them ſword in hand. But he had no ſooner reached the top of the bank than he received two or three bullets, and almoſt inſtantly expired; the remainder of the advanced party were all killed and wounded, except colonel Thomas Rutherford and captain Fraſer, who eſcaped unhurt. The loyaliſts, diſmayed at ſeeing a leader fall in whom they had ſo much confidence, after firing off ſome of their firelocks (which were levelled too high to do any execution), broke and diſperſed, every one taking the neareſt way he could through the woods to his own home. Thoſe from the back country were more ſucceſsful in their retreat, as being better woodſmen than the Highlanders, the leaders of whom were almoſt all taken, together with general Macdonald, and ſent off under a guard to different priſons at the northward. The rebels had one or two ſlightly wounded; the loyaliſts, about eight killed and fourteen wounded, of whom the greater part died. And thus unfortunately ended the firſt enterpriſe in the Carolinas in ſupport of his majeſty's government.

Colonel Moore was afterwards a major-general in the rebel ſervice, and colonel Caſwell was one of their governors; and both behaved with great lenity and moderation towards the loyaliſts while they continued in power. The army of the loyaliſts conſiſted of about eighteen hundred.

The governors of the ſeveral colonies, in their repreſentations to the government of Great Britain, had adduced many reaſons on which they founded the following ſuppoſitions: That on account of the inſufficiency of ſtrength in the different provinces, thoſe who were well affected to Great Britain were reſtrained from taking an active part againſt the Americans; but that, if the mother-country would provide a reſpectable force to countenance and co-operate with them, they would immediately attach themſelves to her cauſe. In conſequence of theſe repreſentations, the fifteenth, twenty-eighth, thirty-third, thirty-ſeventh, fifty-fourth, and fifty-ſeventh regiments, with ſeven companies of the forty-ſixth regiment, embarked from Cork, on the twelfth of February 1776, under the command of lord Cornwallis, in ſeveral tranſports under the convoy of ſir Peter Parker. This is the force above alluded to, intended to co-operate with the loyaliſts in North Carolina. After a long voyage of near three months, occaſioned by the improper lateneſs of their departure from Great Britain, all the fleet, except ſome few ſhips, arrived at Cape Fear, in North Carolina, on the third of May. General Clinton, who had quitted Boſton in December, immediately took the command of the troops, and iſſued a proclamation, in which he invited the inhabitants of the ſeveral colonies to return to their allegiance, and to place themſelves under the protection of the Britiſh government.

The effect produced by this proclamation was trifling, and the cauſe of Great Britain acquired by it but a ſmall addition of adherents.

The remainder of the fleet being not yet arrived, general Clinton reſolved to make a ſmall diverſion, the principal object of which was to obtain a ſupply of cattle, ſheep, and vegetables. Four companies of light infantry, with the thirty-third and thirty-ſeventh regiments, embarking in flat-bottomed boats, proceeded to the town of

Brunſwick, ſituated on a ſmall river to the north-weſtward of Cape Fear. On the approach of the troops the inhabitants abandoned their habitations, and after ſurpriſing a party of the Americans, and ſecuring a quantity of proviſions, the detachment returned on board their reſpective ſhips. It was expected that the troops from Ireland would have arrived two months earlier than they did. General Clinton's orders were to try if any of the ſouthern provinces would take up arms in favour of Britain; in which caſe he was to have left a body of troops to aſſiſt thoſe loyaliſts; but he was inſtructed to repair with the remainder of the troops to New York harbour, by ſuch time as it was probable that the commander in chief would arrive there, from Halifax, to begin the great operations for that campaign. The arrival of the troops at Cape Fear was ſo tardy, that it was obvious that no time could be ſpared ſufficient to make a proper trial of the affections of any of thoſe provinces. General Clinton, however, thought he might avail himſelf of the force collected under his command to attempt a ſecondary purpoſe, ſuggeſted by the information which reached him during his ſtay in Cape Fear river, and which it was hoped might be completed within the time allowed him by his inſtructions. The trade carried on from the harbour of Charleſtown was the great ſupport of the funds for the warlike preparations of the ſouthern colonies. A fort built on Sullivan's Iſland protected and commanded the channel of the harbour. The capture of that fort was the object of the expedition to South Carolina. The poſſeſſion of that fort would give to the Britiſh the entire dominion of the harbour of Charleſtown. It was therefore projected that, if the fort ſhould be taken, a ſufficient garriſon ſhould be left for its defence; but that operations, for the preſent, in this quarter, ſhould be carried no farther.

Attempt of general Clinton's againſt Charleſtown.

General Clinton having waited till the thirtieth of May for the ſhips he expected, reſolved to waſte no more time, but to ſet ſail for

South Carolina. Fortunately however thoſe ſhips joined him off Cape Fear, and the whole fleet now proceeding to Charleſtown, arrived there on the fourth of June. The general immediately taking poſſeſſion of Long Iſland, the loyaliſts of which had been diſarmed by the Americans in January, encamped the troops upon it.

Half a mile from Charleſtown harbour the Americans had conſtructed a ſtrong fortification on Sullivan's Iſland, which conſiſted of twenty-two thirty-two pounders, and was garriſoned by three hundred men. As it commanded the harbour, general Clinton reſolved to attempt the reduction of it. Lee, the American general, who had watched with the utmoſt anxiety every operation of general Clinton, and who had followed him through the ſeveral provinces he had viſited, was at this period encamped on a ſpot northward from Sullivan's Iſland, with which he held a communication by a bridge of boats. Two batteries of cannon and mortars, conſtructed on the point of Long Iſland to anſwer thoſe of the enemy, and to co-operate with the floating batteries deſtined to cover the landing of the troops on Sullivan's Iſland, being completed, it was determined to commence the reduction of the fort on the twenty-eighth of June. At half paſt ten o'clock in the morning ſir Peter Parker, in the Briſtol, made the ſignal for action to the following ſhips—the Experiment of fifty guns; the Active, Solebay, Actæon, Syren, and Sphynx, frigates; the Thunder bomb, and the Friendſhip armed ſhip of twenty-four guns. At a quarter paſt eleven, all the ſhips having got ſprings upon their cables, began a moſt tremendous fire upon the fort. Three of the frigates, the Actæon, Syren, and Sphynx, got aground. The two laſt however hove off, but the firſt ſtuck faſt, and was ſet on fire on the ſucceeding morning, in order to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy.

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At the ſame time that the fleet began firing, the batteries on Long Iſland opened. At twelve o'clock the light-infantry, grenadiers, and the fifteenth regiment, embarked in boats, the floating batteries and armed craft getting under way at the ſame time to cover their landing on Sullivan's Iſland. Scarcely, however, had the detachment proceeded from Long Iſland, before they were ordered to diſembark, and return to their encampment: And it muſt be confeſſed that, if they had landed, they would have had to ſtruggle with difficulties almoſt inſurmountable. The ground on which the fort ſtood was inſulated by a broad and deep trench cut acroſs the iſland, and this canal under the immediate command of the guns of Fort Sullivan.

In the mean time the ſhips continued an unremitting fire upon the fort. Between one and two o'clock the fire of the enemy ſlackened for a ſhort time, owing to a want of ammunition. Having obtained however a freſh ſupply, their fire was renewed, and ceaſed not till between nine and ten o'clock. In this day's attack the Briſtol and Experiment ſuffered moſt; the fire of the enemy being principally directed againſt them, they were left almoſt wrecks upon the water. Early on the morning of the twenty-ninth, the light-infantry, grenadiers, and the fifteenth regiment, were again embarked, and almoſt immediately afterwards ordered to diſembark. In this inactive ſtate did affairs remain till the fifteenth of July, when orders were iſſued to the troops to embark on board the tranſports. Sir H. Clinton had been greatly deceived in his information. The paſſage was not fordable in the rear of the fort; for ſir Henry and ſeveral other officers waded up to their ſhoulders, and then, on finding that the depth of water increaſed, returned. On putting the boats, in which were the artillery, into the water, it was found that they let in the water ſo faſt that they muſt ſink. The officers and men of the artillery who were in them had nearly been loſt. The ſhips kept at too great a diſtance; They might have gone much nearer, and, if they had, would have done great execution by pouring broadſides into the fort; but their diſtance was ſuch that they did little or no damage to the fort. The Americans were much elated upon this ſucceſs, which conſiderably inflamed the ſpirit of revolt.

On the twenty-firſt, the army ſailed for New York, under the convoy of the Solebay frigate, the reſt of the fleet being under the neceſſity of remaining to refit. Thus ended an expedition from which the friends of government had predicted the moſt beneficial conſequences.

CHAP. VI.

Proceedings of Congreſs—Declaration of Independence—Arrival of Lord Howe from England—Battle of Long Iſland—Overtures on the part of the Britiſh Commanders for Peace.—1776.

IT will be remembered that early in the ſummer of 1775 congreſs had voted that the aſſemblies of the ſeveral colonies ſhould give inſtructions to their delegates relative to the independence of America. However premature ſuch a vote might be thought at that period by moderate men, the ſubſequent ſucceſs of the American arms had entirely overcome their objections to its tendency, and had paved the way for another vote more open and more ample in its nature.

Acts of the American congreſs.

On the fifteenth of May 1776 it was reſolved "to recommend to the various aſſemblies and conventions in the United States of America, where no form of government adequate to the exigencies of affairs had yet been adopted, to eſtabliſh ſuch a conſtitution as ſhould be moſt conducive to the public welfare and ſecurity." This vote was immediately publiſhed in the Penſylvania Gazette, with a preamble, ſtating that, as "his Britannic majeſty had, with the concurrence of his parliament, excluded the inhabitants of the colonies from his protection," it was deemed neceſſary and expedient to ſuppreſs and aboliſh the power and conſtitution which had been derived from that ſource.

The aſſemblies of the colonies readily complied with the recommendations of congreſs, except Maryland, whoſe delegates, together with the Penſylvania aſſembly, ſeceded from congreſs. Virginia, however, ſeemed to poſſeſs more of the ſpirit that animated the congreſs than the other provinces; for on the day on which the above reſolution paſſed at Philadelphia, the aſſembly of Virginia, which was then ſitting at Williamſburg, inſtructed their delegates to propoſe a reſolution of a ſimilar tendency to that of congreſs; appointing at the ſame time a committee to prepare the plan of a new conſtitution. They alſo publiſhed the following declaration of rights:

1. That all men are born equally free, poſſeſſing certain natural rights, of which they cannot by any compact deprive their poſterity.

2. That all power is veſted in the people, from whom it is derived.

3. That they have an unalienable indefeaſible right to reform, alter, or aboliſh, their form of government at pleaſure.

4. That the idea of an hereditary firſt magiſtrate is unnatural and abſurd;—and,

5. That no government, independent of, or ſeparated from, the government of Virginia, ought to prevail within the limits of Virginia.

Declaration of independence.

In purſuance of the recommendation of congreſs, moſt of the provinces had inſtructed their delegates on the ſubject of independence. The cataſtrophe was now at hand, and on the fourth of July 1776, America was ſevered for ever from Great Britain by a reſolution, which, after enumerating the ſeveral grievances already ſtated, declared, "that, on account of the king of Great Britain having refuſed to redreſs them, the inhabitants of the United Colonies were thereby diſcharged and abſolved from all allegiance and obedience to him."

Previouſly to the paſſing of this reſolution it had been diſpatched to the different provincial aſſemblies, in order that it might be ratified immediately after it had paſſed the congreſs. No oppoſition was made on this account in any of the provinces, except in Maryland, where the ratification was rejected by the aſſembly, who ordered their delegates to ſecede from congreſs. A body of the people however obliged them to return immediately, and the aſſembly were compelled to ratify the important reſolution. This unanimity was in a great degree produced by the numerous publications that appeared about this period. Of theſe the moſt diſtinguiſhed was a work entitled Common Senſe, the author Mr. Thomas Paine, who has ſince rendered his name ſo famous on the theatre of Europe, and of the world. Such were the meaſures which America had adopted previouſly to the arrival of lord Howe from England.

Arrival of a fleet under lord Howe from England.

The army having now ſufficiently recovered from the fatigue and ſickneſs produced by their confined ſituation in Boſton, departed from Hallifax on the eleventh of June, and proceeded to Sandy Hook, to wait for the arrival of the reinforcements from Europe. It may not be unneceſſary to mention here, that it was the general opinion that ſir William Howe ſhould have gone to Long Iſland inſtead of Hallifax; the ſoldiers might then have been ſupplied from the iſland with cattle in abundance, and if there had been no tents they might have been hutted, as the Americans were, and by that means have been enabled to have opened the campaign much earlier. The army reached Sandy Hook on the twenty-ninth of June. General Howe, who had been there for ſome time, had received from major-general Tryon, the governor of New York, who had been obliged to take refuge on board a man of war, the following account of the ſituation of the Americans in that province:

Having obtained undoubted information that the Britiſh armaments were to be directed againſt New York, they were endeavouring, by ſtrong entrenchments, both there and on Long Iſland, to obſtruct the paſſage of the fleet up the north and eaſt rivers. To increaſe theſe impediments, chains of ſunken veſſels were laid in various parts of the channel. They had alſo magazines of warlike ſtores, and a large train of artillery. In conſequence of this information, and certain that ſuccours from England would ſoon arrive, general Howe reſolved to waſte no more time at Sandy Hook, but to proceed with the army to Staten Iſland, ſituated oppoſite to Long Iſland, where he could watch the operations of the enemy. Accordingly, on the third of July, he landed the troops on the Iſland without oppoſition, the enemy abandoning it on his approach. The troops thus landed, conſiſted of two battalions of light-infantry, two of grenadiers, the fourth, fifth, tenth, ſeventeenth, twenty-ſecond, twenty-third, twenty-ſeventh, thirty-fifth, thirty-eighth, fortieth, forty-ſecond, forty-third, forty-fourth, forty-fifth, forty-ninth, fifty-ſecond, fifty-fifth, ſixty-third, and ſixty-fourth regiments of foot, and part of the forty-ſixth and ſeventy-firſt regiments, and the ſeventeenth regiment of light dragoons. There were beſides two companies of volunteers raiſed at New York, conſiſting of one hundred men each. The total amount was nine thouſand men. It had been determined to land on Long Iſland; but upon further conſideration it was thought more adviſable to wait for the arrival of the troops from Europe, and to land in the mean time upon Staten Iſland.

On the firſt of July lord Howe, and the long-expected ſuccours from England, arrived at Sandy Hook, and thence proceeded to Staten Iſland. The reinforcement brought from England amounted, with the troops already in America, to near thirty thouſand men. The late arrival of this reinforcement is to be particularly lamented, becauſe, for ſome time before this period, general Waſhington's army did not amount to nine thouſand men fit for duty; two thouſand of whom were entirely deſtitute of arms. It muſt therefore be ſufficiently apparent, that moſt important advantages would have accrued to the Britiſh cauſe if the campaign had commenced two months earlier than it did. The American army muſt then have been inevitably overwhelmed by the ſuperiority of numbers and of diſcipline oppoſed to it. So well convinced was colonel Joſeph Read, the American adjutant-general, of this ſuperiority, that, in a letter to a member of congreſs, he ſtated the amount of the American army to be leſs than eight thouſand men, " all of " whom, from the general to the private, were exceedingly diſcou-" couraged." Lord Howe had been appointed to the command of the fleet deſtined to co-operate with his brother general Howe, with the unanimous approbation of the people of England. Whatever may be thought of lord Howe as a naval commander, there was a certain hauteur and frigid reſerve in his deportment that but ill qualified him for the office of a ſoother and a mediator between two contending parties, irritated againſt each other almoſt to a degree of madneſs. His lordſhip brought with him a commiſſion ſanctioned by parliament, empowering him and his brother to treat with the Americans. Their powers were ample and extenſive. They were inveſted with the ability of making peace or of continuing the war—of receiving the ſubmiſſion of all or any one of the colonies—of pardoning or of puniſhing delinquents.

At this period, the celebrated Dr. Franklin, who had for many years reſided in England as agent for the colonies of Maſſachuſets and Penſylvania, retiring to America ſoon after his diſmiſſion from his office of joint poſt-maſter-general of America, was a leading member of the congreſs. To him lord Howe addreſſed a letter ſoon after his arrival. In it he informed him of the nature of his commiſſion; expreſſing, at the ſame time, hopes that he would find in America the ſame diſpoſition for peace that he brought with him, and concluding with requeſting his aid to accompliſh this deſired end. Dr. Franklin, in anſwer, informed his lordſhip, that, preparatory to any propoſitions of amity or peace, it would be required that Great Britain ſhould acknowledge the independence of America, defray the expences of the war, and indemnify the colonies for burning their towns. This, however, he ſtated to be only his own opinion, and that what he had ſaid was not authoriſed by thoſe in whom the Americans had inveſted the power of peace or war. Lord Howe alſo addreſſed a circular letter, accompanied with a declaration, to ſeveral of the late governors of the provinces, acquainting them with the power with which he was inveſted. Theſe letters and the declaration were forwarded to congreſs, and publiſhed in the different newſpapers: At the ſame time his lordſhip opened a correſpondence with general Waſhington, which produced no beneficial conſequence to the Britiſh cauſe.

Lord Howe and his brother, unwilling to accede to thoſe conditions which had been ſtated by Dr. Franklin to be the only terms that would be accepted, and ſeeing, from the declaration of independence, and the vigorous preparations of the enemy, that nothing leſs would be accepted, reſolved to commence hoſtilities immediately.

The troops under general Clinton, from the ſouthward, having joined the grand army, the campaign opened on the twenty-ſecond of Auguſt. A diviſion of four thouſand men, under the command of general Clinton, landed without oppoſition in Graveſend Bay, Long Iſland, to the right of the Narrows, their diſembarkation being covered by three frigates and two bomb-ketches: This diviſion having landed without reſiſtance, the reſt of the army and artillery were alſo landed. The advanced party of the enemy fled at the approach of the army, ſetting fire, on their retreat, to all the houſes and granaries, and ſeeking refuge in the woody heights that commanded the way which the Engliſh were under the neceſſity of paſſing. The Engliſh poſſeſſed an extent, reaching from the Narrows through Graveſend and Utrecht. The Americans, to the number of fifteen thouſand, were poſted on a peninſula, between Mill Creek, a little above Red Hook, and an elbow of the river, called Wallabach Bay. They had conſtructed ſtrong fortifications oppoſite to New York, from which they were ſeparated by the Eaſt River, at the diſtance of a mile. A line of intrenchment from the Mill Creek encloſed a large ſpace of ground, on which ſtood the American camp. This line was not only ſecured by abbatis, but flanked by ſtrong redoubts, and lined with ſpears or lances provided againſt aſſault. From this poſt ten thouſand men, under the command of general Putnam, were detached. Their object was to occupy the heights which obliquely interſected the iſland, and to defend againſt the progreſs of the Engliſh, the defiles which led through thoſe hills.

Oppoſite the centre of Putnam's line ſtood, in the plain, the village of Flat Buſh. To this town the Heſſians, under general De Heiſter, were advanced, occupying entirely the attention of the Americans, and frequently ſkirmiſhing with their patroles. In the mean time ſir Henry Clinton and ſir William Erſkine, having reconnoitred the poſition of the enemy, ſaw that it would not be a difficult matter to turn their left flank, which would either oblige them to riſk an engagement, or to retire under manifeſt diſadvantage. This intelligence being communicated to ſir William Howe, he conſented to make the attempt. Accordingly the right wing of the Engliſh army moved, conſiſting of a ſtrong advanced corps, commanded by general Clinton, ſupported by the brigades under lord Percy. The commander in chief himſelf marched with this corps, which quitted its camp at nine o'clock at night on the twenty-ſixth of Auguſt, croſſing the country, by Flat Lands, in order to ſecure a paſs

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a paſs over the heights of Guiana, on the road to Bedford. This paſs the enemy had neglected to ſecure by detachments, on account of its great diſtance. In order to watch it, however, they ſent out occaſional patroles of cavalry: But one of theſe being intercepted by a Britiſh advanced guard, the paſs was gained without any alarm being communicated to the Americans. At nine o'clock in the morning the Britiſh paſſed the heights and reached Bedford. An attack was immediately begun on the enemy's left; they made but a feeble reſiſtance, and retired from the woody grounds to their lines, into which they threw themſelves in evident confuſion. It is to be lamented that this advantage was not purſued; for in the confuſion into which the enemy were thrown by the rapid march of the Engliſh army, a moſt deciſive victory would have undoubtedly accrued to the Britiſh arms. The works of the enemy could not have reſiſted an attack, when it is conſidered that it might have been made by that part of the army under ſir William Howe, which had not been engaged, and which therefore poſſeſſed a manifeſt ſuperiority over troops fatigued by conteſt, exhauſted by hard labour, and diſheartened by partial defeat.

Battle of Long Iſland or Brooklyn.

As ſoon as the firing on the enemy's left was heard, general De Heiſter, with a column of Heſſians from Flat Buſh, attacked the centre of the Americans. After a warm engagement the enemy was routed and driven into the woods, with the loſs of three pieces of cannon. The left column, led by general Grant, advancing from the Narrows by the edge of the bay, in order to divert the attention of the enemy from the principal attack on the right, about midnight fell in with their advanced guard, ſtationed at a ſtrong paſs, which, however, they immediately abandoned, and retired to a very advantageous poſt, where they kept their ground. On the advancement of the Engliſh, a furious cannonade commenced on both ſides, which was continued with unceaſing perſeverance till the enemy heard the firing at Bedford.

ford. The Americans in this quarter did not attempt to retire until they received news of the total rout of the reſt of their army. Apprehenſive then of being unable to regain their lines, they made a ſudden movement to ſecure a retreat, by croſſing a moraſs to Mill Creek, which covered the right of their works. But this movement was made in much diſorder and confuſion; general Grant, however, did not take adequate advantage of it, for had he moved rapidly to the edge of the moraſs, through which, and over a mill-dam, the principal part of them eſcaped, the greateſt number of the detachment, as well as of thoſe who fled from Flat Buſh, muſt have either been drowned or taken priſoners.

Thus ended the operations of the day: Victory was certainly on the ſide of the Engliſh; but it was not ſo deciſive as it might have been, owing to the reſtrictions impoſed by the commander in chief. The loſs of the Americans was great. Two thouſand were either killed on the field, drowned, or taken priſoners: And among the latter, generals Sullivan, Udell, and lord Sterling. The Maryland regiment ſuffered moſt ſeverely, having loſt upwards of two hundred and ſixty men; which was much regretted, as that regiment was compoſed of young men of the beſt families in the country. The royal army took ſix pieces of braſs ordnance. The loſs on the part of the Engliſh did not exceed three hundred in killed and wounded; of which number between ſixty and ſeventy were killed. Among the killed was lieutenant-colonel Grant, of the fortieth regiment; among the wounded, lieutenant-colonel Monckton. The Britiſh troops, on this occaſion, diſplayed great activity and valour: So impetuous was their courage, that it was not without difficulty that they could be reſtrained from attacking the American lines; and had they been permitted to go on, in the judgment of moſt men, including ſir William Howe himſelf, they would have carried them. "But," ſays the general, "as it was apparent that the lines muſt

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" become ours, at a very cheap rate, by regular approaches, I " would not riſk the loſs that might have been ſuſtained in the " aſſault, and ordered them back to a hollow way, out of the " reach of the muſquetry."

On the evening of the twenty-ſeventh, our army encamped in front of the enemy's lines; and on the twenty-eighth broke ground about ſix hundred yards from one of the redoubts on the left. The Americans, finding that it was impoſſible to maintain their poſt on Long Iſland, evacuated their lines on the twenty-ninth, and made good their retreat to New York. At firſt the wind and tide were both unfavourable to the Americans; nor was it thought poſſible that they could have effected their retreat on the evening of the twenty-ninth, until about eleven o'clock, the wind ſhifting, and the ſea becoming more calm, the boats were enabled to paſs. Another remarkable circumſtance was, that on Long Iſland hung a thick fog, which prevented the Britiſh troops from diſcovering the operations of the enemy; while on the ſide of New York the atmoſphere was perfectly clear. The retreat was effected in thirteen hours, though nine thouſand men had to paſs over the river, beſides field artillery, ammunition, proviſions, cattle, horſes, and carts.

The circumſtances of this retreat were particularly glorious to the Americans. They had been driven to the corner of an iſland, where they were hemmed in within the narrow ſpace of two ſquare miles. In their front was an encampment of near twenty thouſand men; in their rear, an arm of the ſea, a mile wide, which they could not croſs, but in ſeveral embarkations. Notwithſtanding theſe difficulties, they ſecured a retreat without the loſs of a man. The pickets of the Engliſh army arrived only in time to fire upon their rear-guard, already too far removed from the ſhore to receive any damage. Sir William Howe had early intelligence ſent him of the retreat of the Americans;

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Americans; but a conſiderable time had elapſed before a purſuit was ordered. Sir William Howe at length, however, deſired lord Percy to order a purſuit; but it was too late. The enemy had effected their retreat, which was rendered leſs hazardous from the want of frigates in the Eaſt River between Long Iſland and New York. Had any armed ſhips been ſtationed there, it would have been impoſſible for them to have made their eſcape. The Eaſt River is deep enough for a ſeventy-four gun ſhip to ride at anchor. Waſhington thought himſelf happy in getting ſafe with his papers from Long Iſland, having croſſed to New York in a ſmall boat. Had two or even one frigate moored as high up as Red-Hook, as the Phœnix and Roſe men of war had done before, the one carrying forty-four guns, and the other twenty-eight, the retreat of the Americans would have been cut off moſt completely; and indeed ſo decided were the Americans themſelves in this opinion, that, had only a ſingle frigate been ſtationed in the Eaſt River, they muſt have ſurrendered at diſcretion. It is to be obſerved, that in the very ſame boats in which the Americans croſſed from New York to Long Iſland, they re-croſſed after their defeat from Long Iſland to New York, the boats having lain for three days on the Long Iſland ſhore in readineſs to carry them off. Now it is evident that this ſmall craft, by the above precaution, might have been effectually deſtroyed.

In reviewing the actions of men, the hiſtorian is often at a loſs to conjecture the ſecret cauſes that gave them birth. It cannot be denied but that the American army lay almoſt entirely at the will of the Engliſh. That they were therefore ſuffered to retire in ſafety, has by ſome been attributed to the reluctance of the commander in chief to ſhed the blood of a people ſo nearly allied to that ſource from whence he derived all his authority and power. We are rather inclined to adopt this idea, and to ſuppoſe motives of miſtaken policy, than to leave ground for an imagination that the eſcape of the Americans reſulted from any want of exertion on the part of ſir William Howe, or deficiency in the military ſcience. He might poſſibly have conceived that the late victory would produce a revolution in ſentiment capable of terminating the war without the extremity which it appeared to be, beyond all poſſibility of doubt, in his power to enforce.

About this time a reinforcement arrived under the command of ſir George Collier, after a very long paſſage, occaſioned by their too late departure from England.

The Engliſh army, being now in poſſeſſion of Long Iſland, commanded New York; and Governor's Iſland, being of courſe no longer tenable by the enemy, was alſo evacuated on the night of the thirtieth of Auguſt. Two brigades of Heſſians, and one Britiſh brigade, being left at Bedford, the reſt of the army was poſted at New Town, Hell Gate, Buſhwick, and Fluſhing. On that part of Long Iſland oppoſite Horan's Hook, where the enemy had thrown up a ſtrong work, two batteries were erected. This work commanded Hell Gate, a paſſage between the iſlands of Buchanan, Montreſor, and the Two Brothers, into the Sound which ſeparates Long Iſland from New York and the Connecticut ſhore. The Engliſh batteries in a ſhort time not only ſilenced the fire of the enemy from the work, but broke it up entirely, and rendered it utterly indefenſible.

In the Sound are three ſmall iſlands, Barren, Montreſor, and Buchanan, which are only uſeful inaſmuch as they can awe veſſels paſſing through the Sound. Of theſe the Engliſh took poſſeſſion; and thus was all communication with New York prevented by ſea.

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Overtures on the part of the Britiſh commanders for peace.

Whilſt theſe operations were carrying on, general Sullivan, who had been taken priſoner on Long Iſland, was diſmiſſed on his parole, and diſpatched to Philadelphia at his own requeſt, in order to ſubmit ſome propoſitions to congreſs. In thoſe propoſitions lord Howe expreſſed a wiſh to enter into conferences with ſeveral moderate members of congreſs, not as deputies from an independent ſtate, but as private gentlemen of influence in the different colonies. In theſe conferences preliminaries were to be ſettled, on which an accommodation of the differences between the two countries was to be founded. As an inducement to congreſs to comply with theſe propoſitions, it was ſtrongly inſiſted that ſo favourable a criſis as the preſent would not again occur; inaſmuch as neither party had been reduced to a ſtate of humiliation by compulſory means, nor to a ſituation where aſſent or ruin was the only alternative.

The congreſs, in reply to this meſſage, acquainted his lordſhip that it was inconſiſtent with their dignity to ſend any of their members to confer with him in a private capacity; and requeſted that they would depute a committee to learn whether his lordſhip had authority to treat with perſons commiſſioned by congreſs, and that they would receive what propoſals he was commanded to offer. Accordingly a committee, conſiſting of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Meſſrs. John Adams and Edward Rutledge, was appointed to wait on lord Howe at Staten Iſland. No advantage could be expected to accrue to the mother-country from ſuch a committee; the members of it being men whoſe principles were violent in the extreme, and who ſought every opportunity of reducing the parent-ſtate to humiliating and mortifying ſituations. In the outſet of the conference lord Howe ſtill adhered to the contents of the meſſage carried to congreſs by general Sullivan, viz. "that though his powers did not "extend ſo far as to treat with the above gentlemen, as a committee

" deputed by congreſs, yet he was empowered to enter into a con-" ſultation on the means of reconciling the differences between Great " Britain and America with any gentleman of influence and im-" portance." As ſoon as his lordſhip had made this declaration, the committee informed him that they ſhould not act in any other character than that with which congreſs had inveſted them: Nevertheleſs they wiſhed to hear any propoſals he might have to make. His lordſhip then informed them that the moſt ardent wiſh of the king and government of Great Britain, was, to put an end to the diſſenſions at preſent exiſting between the parent-ſtate and the colonies. To accompliſh this deſire, every act of parliament which had been thought obnoxious to the latter ſhould undergo a reviſal, and every juſt cauſe of complaint ſhould be removed, if the latter would declare her willingneſs to ſubmit to the authority of the Britiſh government.

In reply to this offer the committee declared, that an acknowledgment of the ſuperiority of Great Britain could not now be expected. They recalled to his lordſhip's remembrance the many petitions that had been preſented by the colonies to parliament and the king, all of which, particularly the laſt, had been treated with diſreſpect and contempt. They reminded him that it was not America that had ſevered herſelf from Great Britain; but Great Britain that had ſeparated herſelf from America. The latter had never declared herſelf independent till the former had denounced war againſt her, and thereby rendered ſuch a declaration indiſpenſably neceſſary. Beſides, even if congreſs wiſhed to replace America in her former ſituation, ſhe could not carry theſe wiſhes into execution; for the declaration of independence had been made in conſequence of the congregated voice of the whole people, by whom alone it could be invalidated and aboliſhed. But though the Americans deſired not to

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to return under the domination of England, yet they were willing to enter into any treaty that ſhould be deemed advantageous to both countries. From this declaration of the committee, it required very little penetration to diſcover that America was reſolved to enter into no accommodation; but to procure the acknowledgment of her independence by force. Immediately therefore on being furniſhed with this anſwer, lord Howe put an end to the conference.

When the deputies returned to congreſs they made the following report:—" That it was their opinion that lord Howe's commiſſion " did not contain any other powers than thoſe of granting pardons, " and of receiving all, or any one, of the colonies into the protection " of the Britiſh government, upon ſubmiſſion. With regard to treating with congreſs, the commiſſioners were totally ſilent, on account " of their being forbidden to acknowledge the authority of that aſſembly, and empowered only to treat with the members of it in " their private characters, as men of abilities, weight, or importance." The commiſſioners being therefore thus limited in their powers, no firm reliance could be placed on any terms they might propoſe or accede to *. Though lord Howe had been thus unſucceſsful in his propoſitions to the congreſs committee, he thought it neceſſary to publiſh a declaration to the people of America, wherein, after glancing at the anſwer returned by that committee to his offers of reconciliation, he acquainted them that the parent-ſtate was willing to receive into its boſom and protection all who might be willing to return to their former ſubmiſſion and obedience. His lordſhip was certainly induced to adopt this meaſure from the conviction that a majority of the inhabitants of America were decided-

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* It was confidently aſſerted at Philadelphia that Mr. Rutledge, upon his return, declared that the whole of what had paſſed between lord Howe and the committee had not been made public, *i. e.* the whole of what had been offered by lord Howe.

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ly in favour of entering into an accommodation of the differences between the two powers; and this conviction was by no means ill-founded. This declaration however produced but little effect, for thoſe who reſolved to accede to nothing ſhort of an acknowledgment of the independence of America had acquired the ſole management of affairs, and had concentered in themſelves all the powers and reſources of the country.

CHAP. VII.

The Americans retreat, and the Engliſh Army takes poſſeſſion of New York—The Americans greatly diſheartened—Deſign to burn New York partly executed—Various Skirmiſhing—Battle of White Plains.

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CONVINCED now that all pacific meaſures would be ineffectual, lord Howe reſolved to adopt other meaſures. It has been before ſaid that when the provincial forces retreated from Long Iſland they took ſhelter in New York. Here they employed themſelves in erecting batteries, and throwing up intrenchments, in order to annoy the Britiſh ſhipping. Both armies were divided by the Eaſt River, the breadth of which, at this part, was about thirteen hundred yards. After a long and ſevere cannonade it was reſolved to make a deſcent on the iſland on which New York ſtands. To prevent their intentions from being diſcovered by the enemy, five ſhips of war moved higher up the Eaſt River, while, on the fifteenth of September, ſeveral flat-bottomed boats were employed in landing the troops.

The firſt diviſion, conſiſting of four thouſand men under general Clinton, landed on New York iſland, at a place called Kipp's Bay, about three miles from the town, and took poſt on a height called the Inclenberg. The enemy were at this time in poſſeſſion of very advantageous ground and powerful intrenchments: Nevertheleſs, they not only refrained from oppoſing the Engliſh, but abandoned their works on account of the furious cannonade of the five men of war appointed to cover the diſembarkation of the troops. As the different diviſions, landed they poſted themſelves on the high grounds that ſtretch in an aſcending direction from the ſea-ſhore. At the ſame time a detachment of Heſſian troops advanced to New York, and in their way fell in with a party of the enemy retreating by the paſs at Blooming Dale. A ſkirmiſh enſued, in which the Britiſh were victorious, and the Americans loſt a brigadier-general and ſeveral other officers. About the ſame time another detachment of the Britiſh troops made a movement to the right, in order to attack a large body of the enemy, who, however, on the approach of the Engliſh, retreated to the main body of the American army poſted on Morris's Heights. No attempt being made to defend New York, it was taken poſſeſſion of by the Engliſh. General Waſhington's army, at this period, amounted to twenty-three thouſand men, but moſt of theſe, raw, undiſciplined, and ill provided with neceſſaries.

The Americans retreat, and the Engliſh army takes poſſeſſion of New York.

New York is ſituated in an iſland about fifteen miles in length, but not more than two in breadth; on which account the Engliſh were enabled to extend their camp quite acroſs the iſland, on the part fartheſt from the town. The enemy were poſted oppoſite to them, and in ſuch an advantageous manner that any attack upon them would have been dangerous and imprudent. General Waſhington had ſtationed four thouſand five hundred men in New York, which he withdrew on the approach of the Britiſh army; ſix thouſand five hundred at Haerlem; and twelve thouſand at a place called King's Bridge, which he had fortified in order to ſecure a retreat, in caſe he ſhould be under the neceſſity of relinquiſhing his preſent ſituation, to the continent. And indeed it was peculiarly fortunate for the enemy that they were thus, in a manner, ſecure from attack, as their ardour had viſibly declined ſince their defeat on Long Iſland. A pauſe was neceſſary in order to enable them to recover their former ſpirit.

The American army greatly diſheartened.

The check at Long Iſland, and the expulſion from New York, diſpirited the American troops greatly. They apprehended every thing, and were in great deſpair. The militia were impatient to return, and totally diſobedient to orders. They went off by half, and in ſome inſtances by whole, regiments. What was called their flying camp was literally ſo. Ravages were committed not only by privates, but, among the New Englanders, by officers. "Almoſt "every villany and raſcality," a gentleman of the army * wrote to his friend, "was daily practiſed with impunity. Unleſs ſome "ſpeedy and effectual means of reform are adopted by congreſs, our "cauſe will be loſt. As the war muſt be carried on ſyſtematically, "you muſt eſtabliſh your army upon a permanent footing, and give "your officers good pay, that they may be, and ſupport the character of, "gentlemen, and not be driven, by a ſcanty allowance, to the low and "dirty arts which many of them practiſe, to filch the public of more "money than all the amount of the difference of pay. It is not "ſtrange that there ſhould be a number of bad officers in the con-"tinental ſervice, when you conſider that many of them were "choſen by their own men, who elected them, not from a regard to "merit, but from the knowledge they had of their being ready to "aſſociate with them on the footing of equality. It was ſometimes "the caſe, that, when a company was forming, the men would "chuſe thoſe for officers who conſented to throw their pay into a "joint ſtock with the privates, from which captains, lieutenants, "enſigns, ſerjeants, corporals, drummers, and privates, drew equal "ſhares. Can it then be wondered at, that a captain ſhould be tried "and broken for ſtealing his ſoldiers blankets? or that another "officer ſhould be found ſhaving his men in the face of characters "of diſtinction? With an army of force before, and a ſecret one

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* General Read, in a letter to a member of congreſs, dated July 4th, 1776.

" behind, we ſtand on a point of land with ſix thouſand old " troops, if a year's ſervice can entitle them to that name, and " about fifteen hundred new levies of this province; many diſ- " affected, and more doubtful. In this ſituation we are. Every man " in the army, from the general to the private (acquainted with " our true ſituation) is exceedingly diſcouraged. Had I known the " true poſture of affairs, no conſideration would have tempted me " to have taken an active part in this ſcene: And this ſentiment is " univerſal. General Howe is ſufficiently ſtrong, conſidering the " goodneſs of his troops, to make a ſucceſsful attempt on the " Americans; but being in daily expectation of reinforcements " from Europe, he will undoubtedly remain inactive until their " arrival."

The greateſt animoſities, too, prevailed between the northern and ſouthern troops. Their reflections on each other were mutual and equally illiberal. Their variances were ſo great, that the Penſylvanians and New Englanders would as ſoon have fought each other as the enemy. Officers of all ranks were indiſcriminately treated with the greateſt ſcurrility and abuſe, for no other reaſon than that they were born on this or that ſide of Hudſon's River; juſt as formerly, in England, violent diſputes were carried on between the inhabitants of the ſouth and thoſe of the north ſide of the Trent.

As ſoon as the Engliſh had taken poſſeſſion of New York, general Howe, and ſome other general officers, repaired to the houſe of a Mrs. Murray, with whom they remained in converſation ſo long, that general Putnam, with three thouſand five hundred men, was enabled to make good his retreat to the main body of the American army. But delay is not the only error imputable to the commander in chief in this tranſaction. It has been mentioned that the American army was poſted at Haerlem and King's Bridge: Its poſition at this little place was for the purpoſe of ſecuring a retreat to the continent, ſhould the preſſure of affairs render ſuch a meaſure neceſſary. Inſtead, therefore, of directing his attention to New York, ſir William Howe ought to have thrown his army round King's Bridge, by which means he would have hemmed in the whole American army; and ſuch a ſtep was not at all impracticable, when we conſider the extent of the military and naval reſources ſubſervient to his will.

September.

On the morning of the ſixteenth of September, a detachment was ſent out from the main body of the Americans to a wood facing the left flank of the Engliſh army. Three companies of our light-infantry were diſpatched to diſlodge them. The enemy, with a ſeeming intention of retreating to the main body, retired into the interior parts of the wood, where they were reinforced by another detachment; which made it neceſſary that the remainder of the light-infantry, with the forty-ſecond regiment, ſhould be ſent to ſupport the companies that were engaged. The action was carried on by reinforcements on both ſides, and became very warm. The enemy, however, poſſeſſed a great advantage from the circumſtance of engaging within half a mile of their intrenched camp, whence they could be ſupplied with freſh troops as often as occaſion required. Victory, nevertheleſs, was on the part of the loyaliſts; and the Americans retreated with the loſs of three hundred killed and wounded.

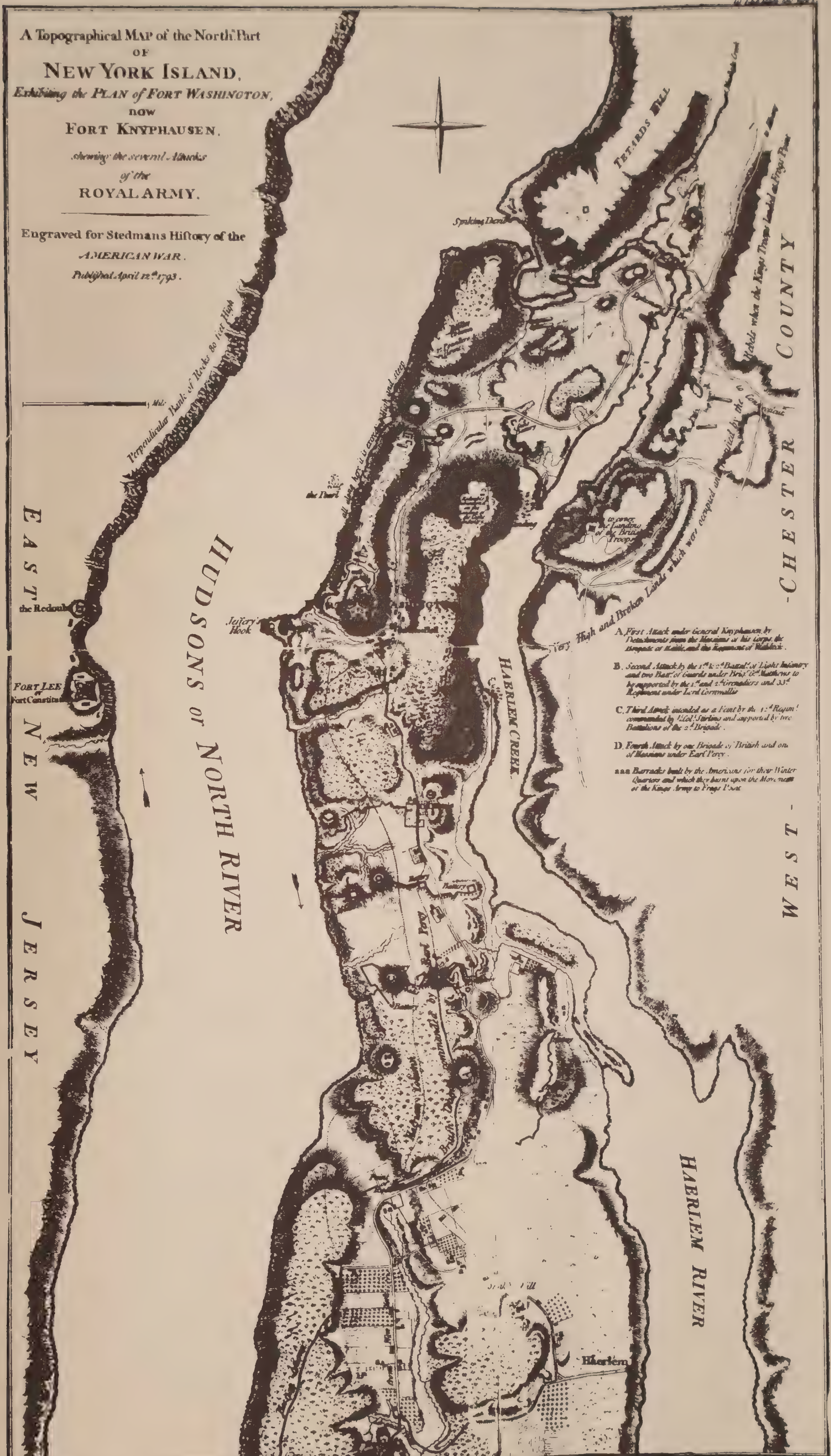
The Engliſh encampment, it has been ſaid, extended acroſs the iſland, on each ſide of which were ſtationed ſhips of war, in order to ſecure the right and left flanks. The enemy ſaw the advantage of this diſpoſition of the ſhipping, and attempted to make ſome impreſſion on it by ſending down four fire-ſhips, which, however, by the ſkilfulneſs of the commanders of the Engliſh veſſels, were prevented from doing any damage. It had been reſolved by the Americans, in caſe the Engliſh ſhould obtain poſſeſſion of New York, to ſet fire to it in ſeveral places, previous to the evacuation of it by the

Deſign to burn New York partly executed.

the enemy. The ſpeed, however, with which they were obliged to quit it, had rendered it impoſſible for them to put their deſigns into execution: Nevertheleſs, ſeveral perſons having purpoſely ſecreted themſelves in the deſerted houſes, contrived to ſet fire to the town, on the morning of the twenty-firſt of September, in ſeveral places. One-third of the town was thus deſtroyed; and had not the military exerted themſelves in a moſt extraordinary manner, the whole would have been levelled with the ground. The flames firſt broke out at ſome wooden ſtore-houſes, at the ſouthernmoſt or windward part of New York, near the Whitehall-ſtairs, juſt by the battery, and ſoon became general up the Broadway, &c. by the violence of the wind blowing burnt ſhingles from the houſes on fire to others, and ſetting them on fire in rapid ſucceſſion. The wind was ſo ſtrong, that it was almoſt impoſſible to face it, for ſmoke and flakes of fire. The next day (Saturday) a great many cart-loads of bundles of pine ſticks, dipped at each end for five or ſix inches in brimſtone and other combuſtible matters, were found concealed in cellars of houſes to which the incendiaries had not had time to ſet fire. Between one and two hundred men and old women were taken up during the night, and ſent to gaol on ſuſpicion, and three or four men detected with matches and combuſtibles were killed by the enraged ſoldiers. Moſt, if not all the men and women put into gaol, were releaſed in a few days, after having their names taken and examined by a committee. The old Engliſh church, and a German church, near it, with about eleven hundred houſes, were burnt. The rebels at Paulus Hook gave three cheers when the ſteeple of the old Engliſh church fell down, which, when burning, looked awfully grand.

The American army, with ſtrong ground in their front, and extenſive fortifications in their rear towards King's Bridge, ſeemed to think themſelves perfectly ſecure, and almoſt invulnerable. The Britiſh troops knew the ſtrength of ſituation which the enemy poſſeſſed, and therefore employed themſelves in throwing up a chain of redoubts on Macgowan's Hill to cover New York, and render it capable of a vigorous defence, even after the bulk of the army ſhould be engaged in more remote operations. As ſoon as the redoubts were completed it was determined to attempt the enemy's rear, by the New England road, from which they received moſt of their ſupplies. This arrangement would either force them to hazard a battle, or reduce them to the neceſſity of ſuffering themſelves to be ſurrounded and confined in York Iſland. It has been aſſerted that as ſoon as the Engliſh had taken poſſeſſion of New York, they ſhould have attacked the Americans, as the different poſitions which they had taken between the city and Fort Waſhington, afterwards called Fort Knyphauſen, might have been forced without great difficulty or danger. In conſequence of the determination juſt mentioned, three brigades of Britiſh and one of Heſſians being left to guard New York, the reſt of the troops embarked on the twelfth of October in flat-bottomed boats and batteaux, and paſſing through an intricate and dangerous paſſage, called Hell Gate, to the Sound, landed the ſame morning at Frog's Neck, not far from Weſt Cheſter, on the continent towards Connecticut. This was thought to be an error on the part of the commander in chief: Frog's Neck being really an iſland connected with the main by a bridge, eaſy to be broken down (as happened in fact) by the enemy. The miſtake, when diſcovered, ſhould have been remedied inſtantly, by puſhing along ſome other route to King's Bridge, which would undoubtedly have reduced the enemy to the neceſſity either of defending the iſland or of forcing their way through the Engliſh army, in order to gain the territory of New England. All poſſibility of their retiring to the Jerſeys was cut off by the Britiſh ſhips, which had now, with incredible difficulty

and


A Topographical MAP of the Northn Part
OF
NEW YORK ISLAND,
Exhibiting the PLAN of FORT WASHINGTON,
now
FORT KNYPHAUSEN,
shewing the several Attacks
of the
ROYAL ARMY.
Engraved for Stedmans History of the
AMERICAN WAR.
Published April 12th 1793.
Mile
Perpendicular Bank of Rocks 80 feet High
TETARDS HILL
Spyking Devil
the Redoubt
FORT LEE or Fort Constitution
Jeffery's Hook
the Pearl
HUDSONS or NORTH RIVER
EAST NEW JERSEY
HAERLEM CREEK
HAERLEM RIVER
WEST-CHESTER COUNTY
to cover the Landing of the British Troops
Very High and Broken Lands which were occupied
A. First Attack under General Knyphausen by Detachments from the Hessians of his Corps, the Brigade of Rahl, and the Regiment of Waldeck.
B. Second Attack by the 1st & 2d Battal. of Light Infantry and two Batt. of Guards under Brig. Gen. Matthews to be supported by the 1st and 2d Grenadiers and 33d Regiment under Lord Cornwallis
C. Third Attack intended as a Feint by the 42d Regimt commanded by Lt Col. Stirling and supported by two Battalions of the 2d Brigade.
D. Fourth Attack by one Brigade of British and one of Hessians under Earl Percy.
aaa Barracks built by the Americans for their Winter Quarters and which they burnt upon the Movements of the Kings Army to Frogs Point
Haerlem

and danger, paſſed Fort Waſhington, and taken their ſtations in the North River. Thus it is ſufficiently apparent that the Americans could not poſſibly have effected a retreat without hazarding a battle, unleſs, indeed, they were to be permitted to retire to the continent in as ſecure and uninterrupted a manner as they did from Long Iſland to New York. The Americans themſelves began to entertain ſerious alarms for their ſafety; for on the day the Engliſh landed, their main body moved off, in order to avoid being blockaded in the iſland. This movement originated with general Lee, who had recently arrived from South Carolina, and whoſe abilities and ſucceſs had rendered his opinion of great weight and importance. But this meaſure, to which the American army undoubtedly owed its ſafety, was adopted contrary to the original plan of general Waſhington. The circumſtances of it are as follow:—When the Britiſh army landed at Frog's Neck, Waſhington harangued his officers, and told them, that they muſt retreat no farther, but decide the fate of America on that ground. The ground on which they were then entrenched, extended in front of King's Bridge. General Lee came up ſoon after, and having learnt what had paſſed, remonſtrated againſt ſo abſurd a determination. He repreſented that the Britiſh would infallibly hem Waſhington's army round with ſuch a chain of works, as would reduce him to the neceſſity of ſurrendering through famine, without expoſing them to the hazard of a battle. Lee's repreſentations ſucceeded; and the American army immediately reſolved to quit ſo dangerous a poſition.

October 18.

On the eighteenth of October, the Britiſh troops re-embarking proceeded along the coaſt to Pell's Point, where they ought to have landed originally; and diſembarked there without difficulty. Soon after their landing a ſharp ſkirmiſh happened in an attempt to diſlodge the enemy from a narrow paſs, at which they had taken poſt with a ſtrong corps. Notwithſtanding their advantageous ſituation,

the

CHAP. VII. 1776. the Americans retired with conſiderable loſs. Thirty-two were killed and wounded on the ſide of the Engliſh.

Oct. 21. On the twenty-firſt of October the main diviſion of the Britiſh army moved to New Rochelle, ſituated on the ſound that divides Long Iſland from the continent. Here they were joined by the ſecond diviſion of foreign troops that had arrived from England, under the command of general Knyphauſen. The American army was now in a diſagreeable ſituation. The ſoldiers were very poorly clothed, and a ſcarcity of proviſions among them had been followed by much illneſs. Nor, amidſt theſe diſadvantages, was their poſition either ſecure or eligible in other reſpects. Their ſole reſource was to avoid action: For which reaſon it was determined in a council of war that they ſhould extend themſelves into a long line behind the Brunx, well ſecured by works thrown up in front, to command every ford. The provincial army, in conſequence of this determination, ſtretched along the ground parallel to that on which the Britiſh troops were marching; from King's Bridge on the right, to White Plains on the left. The two armies were ſeparated by a deep river called the Brunx, already mentioned. The rear of the Britiſh was covered by the Sound, not far diſtant. With this relative arrangement the armies moved ſlowly towards the White Plains, where, on the eaſtern ſide of the Brunx, a detachment had been fortifying a camp for the Americans, which camp they occupied with their whole army on the twenty-ſixth.

Oct. 28. The royal army, in two columns, marched from its encampment near Ward's Houſe, on the banks of the Brunx; ſir William Howe accompanied the left column, ſir Henry Clinton commanded the right. As they approached the White Plains, the right column fell in with ſeveral bodies of the enemy: And thoſe bodies, ſharply driven back, propagated a conſiderable alarm in the enemy's camp. When our troops arrived within about three quarters of a mile of the Americans,

The battle of White Plains.

Americans, they had a diſtinct view of their whole poſition. They were encamped on a long ridge of hill, the brow of which was covered with lines haſtily thrown up. A bend of the Brunx protected their right flank, and by another turning in its courſe enveloped alſo the rear of their right wing. Farther ſtill, the point of the hill on the enemy's right, exceedingly ſteep and rocky, was covered by a ſtrong abbatis in front of the entrenchment. The left of the enemy was rather refuſed to the line in which the Britiſh troops approached them, ſo that they could not judge of it with great accuracy; but it appeared to be poſted in very broken ground, difficult to be aſſailed, and furniſhing a ſecure retreat. The weakeſt part was the centre. The ſlope of the hill was very gradual in the direction of the road by the Court Houſe. The lines were by no means formidable, not being fraized; and the rockineſs of the ſoil prevented the ditch from being made of any troubleſome depth. The Britiſh had in the field thirteen thouſand effective men. The enemy's force was ſaid to exceed twenty thouſand, but was not probably above ſeventeen or eighteen thouſand: Nor was a great part of this force any other than a looſe militia; nor had the continental regiments yet acquired the character which they afterwards attained from continued and more ſucceſsful ſervice. Had an aſſault been made on the centre of the enemy's works, defeat would have been deſtruction to the Americans. The whole of their right wing muſt have fallen into the power of the Britiſh army; for the Brunx not being paſſable in that part, cut off their retreat, and victory was to be reaſonably expected, not only from the valour of our troops, but from the confuſion of the enemy. This indeed was obvious beyond example. When our army came in ſight their tents were ſtanding. The hurry of ſtriking them, and of loading the waggons with the baggage, together with the movement of troops backward and forward, in evident uncertainty of purpoſe, gave an extraordinary picture of alarm.

During this time the Americans kept up a cannonade on our army, who returned it, but the diſtance was ſo great that there was little effect on either ſide. Part of the Britiſh columns formed behind ſome riſing ground, nearly parallel to the enemy's front; but the right wing of the Britiſh did not extend beyond the centre of the American army. That part of the enemy's poſition did not ſeem to be conſidered; all the attention of the Britiſh commander being fixed on another part of the field. Four thouſand of the enemy were poſted on a hill in a line with the right of their camp, but ſeparated from it by the Brunx. The reaſon of their occupying this poſture is inexplicable, unleſs it be that they could not be contained within the works of their camp. The poſſeſſion of that hill would not enable the royaliſts to annoy their camp, for it roſe ſo gradually from the Brunx that its creſt was not within random cannon ſhot; as was proved by many of our battalions lying upon it on their arms the whole evening after the action: Nor had the enemy to apprehend that, from that quarter, an attack might be made on their rear, ſince the Brunx, deep and impracticable, would have been ſtill between the two armies. It ſeems to have been a blunder of general Waſhington's to have placed ſo conſiderable a corps entirely out of the capability of ſupporting the reſt of the army; for two battalions and two pieces of cannon could effectually prevent them from croſſing either a ford or a bridge near their right flank, for the purpoſe of annoying our troops, whilſt they aſſailed their camp. Poſſibly this error might lead ſir William Howe to imagine this hill to be of more importance than it immediately appeared to be from its ſituation. However, againſt this hill all the efforts of the Britiſh army were directed. A part of our left wing paſſed the ford, which was entirely under command of our cannon. They then mounted the hill, and very gallantly drove the enemy from the ſtrong heights on which they were poſted. It was an attack little leſs rough than what an aſſault on the enemy's lines might be conceived to be: And victory, being obtained, was not followed by a ſingle advantage. The Americans remained tranquil in their entrenchments.

On the part of the Britiſh, it became neceſſary to ſuſtain the troops which had taken poſſeſſion of the hill; and as this occaſioned a difficulty of co-operation between the left and right wing of our army, it was obvious that the latter could no longer expediently attempt any thing againſt the enemy's main body. When, three days after, preparations were made for attacking the enemy's camp, doubts were entertained concerning the wiſdom of carrying the meaſure into execution; as the Americans had recovered their ſpirits, and had aſſiduouſly ſtrengthened their works. A rain of uncommon violence, during the whole night, made the ground ſo ſlippery that it was thought it could not be poſſible to mount the face of the hill: And, for that profeſſed reaſon, the intended aſſault was laid aſide.

On the night of the twenty-eighth of October the Britiſh troops lay on their arms, and encamped next day with the left wing in the field of battle, and the right extending from the other ſide of the Brunx; which poſition enabled them to make a front parallel to a certain extent with that of the enemy. In the mean time the Americans, who ſtudiouſly avoided being reduced to the neceſſity of a pitched battle, employed themſelves in ſtrengthening their lines. On the thirtieth, four battalions from York Iſland, and two from the Maroneck Poſt, having reinforced the Britiſh army, a diſpoſition was made for the attack of the enemy's lines on the ſucceeding morning. This reſolution, however, was abandoned, on account of rainy and tempeſtuous weather, as already mentioned. On the thirty-firſt, the weather proved fine about noon, but the commander in chief did not think proper to put his former intentions in execution. The enemy had rendered their lines ſufficiently ſtrong to reſiſt an attack, but being informed by a deſerter that the Britiſh army would march againſt them the next morning, they evacuated their lines on the morning of the firſt of September; and retired acroſs the Crotton river to North Caſtle, ſetting fire, in their retreat, to all the houſes on White Plains. Their poſition was now ſo advantageous, that any attack on them muſt have proved unſucceſsful, for the river Crotton ſtretched along their front, and their rear was defended by woods and heights. Convinced that it was part of the enemy's ſyſtem ſtudiouſly to avoid an action, and that their knowledge of the country enabled them to execute this ſyſtem with advantage, general Howe reſolved to ceaſe an ineffectual purſuit, and employ himſelf in the reduction of King's Bridge and Fort Waſhington. This laſt poſt was of the utmoſt importance, inaſmuch as it ſecured an immediate intercourſe with the Jerſey ſhore, to Fort Lee, and effectually obſtructed the navigation of the North River. It was ſituated on the weſtern ſide of New York Iſland, at a ſmall diſtance from King's Bridge, and almoſt oppoſite to Fort Lee. The fortifications were in good order, but its principal ſtrength conſiſted in its ſituation; for it could not be approached without expoſing the beſiegers to a heavy fire from the garriſon, and the works and lines by which it was ſurrounded. Senſible of the importance of this poſt, the Americans had garriſoned it with three thouſand men, under the command of colonel Magaw, a gentleman peculiarly fitted for the truſt repoſed in him. He was brave, generous, and humane; his manners engaging, and his education liberal. He was a native of Penſylvania; and the former part of his life had been ſpent in the profeſſion of the law. As ſoon, however, as the diſturbances commenced, he offered his ſervices to congreſs; whom he ſerved with zeal and fidelity, that could reſult only from a conviction that the cauſe for which he fought was the cauſe of liberty and independence. On the fifteenth of November, the Engliſh batteries being completed, a ſummons was ſent to the garriſon to ſurrender, on pain of being put to the ſword. Before this ſummons was ſent, it was objected to the general by an Engliſh officer of rank, that this menace would determine Waſhington to withdraw the garriſon or reinforce it, which latter he did; and returned for anſwer, that he would defend it to the laſt extremity. It was determined therefore to commence a vigorous attack upon it next morning. The army was divided into four parts. The firſt, on the ſide of King's Bridge, under general Knyphauſen, conſiſted of five thouſand Heſſians. The ſecond contained the guards and light-infantry, under general Matthews, together with two battalions of grenadiers and the thirty-third regiment, commanded by lord Cornwallis: This diviſion was to land at Haerlem Creek, in thirty flat-bottomed boats, which, for that purpoſe, had paſſed up the North River in the night. The third diviſion, compriſing the forty-ſecond regiment, was intended to make a feint in batteaux upon the left, between the enemy's lines, towards New York. The fourth diviſion, under the command of lord Percy, was to attack in front of the lines above Haerlem Plain. Lord Howe attended the operations of the laſt body. Soon after day-break, on the ſixteenth, the cannonading began, and continued with great fury on both ſides till noon. The Heſſians, under the command of general Knyphauſen, then filed off in two columns; one of which, led by colonel Ralle, aſcended a hill circuitouſly, not without much toil. They gained however the ſummit of it, and penetrating through the advanced works of the enemy, formed within a hundred yards of the covered-way of the front. The ſecond column, commanded by general Knyphauſen, climbed the hill in a direct line. They had to paſs an almoſt impervious wood, which was rendered more dangerous by abbatis of bruſh-wood and felled timber, covering both ſides of the declivity: Nevertheleſs, after great labour, they penetrated through the wood, and fixed themſelves on the top of the aſcent. The ſecond diviſion was equally ſucceſsful: The light-infantry made good their landing, and forced the enemy from their rocks and trees up a ſteep and rugged mountain. The third diviſion was much galled in croſſing the lower part of Haerlem Creek. Colonel Sterling, the commander of the forty-ſecond, had to encounter a heavy fire before he landed, and he had then to aſcend a woody promontory, the ground of which was very uneven: Nevertheleſs he ſucceeded in his attempt, and, though the poſt was obſtinately defended, he carried it, making two hundred of the enemy priſoners. The laſt diviſion was not leſs fortunate in the advances they made through the enemy's lines. Lord Percy, with his uſual gallantry and good conduct, having ſurmounted incredible difficulties, carried the advanced works of the enemy. The garriſon, finding that it was not poſſible to defend the fort longer, ſurrendered priſoners of war. The loſs of the royal army, in killed and wounded, amounted to about eight hundred: That of the garriſon, including killed, wounded, and priſoners, about three thouſand three hundred. It was a great error in colonel Magaw, that he ſuffered his troops to crowd into the fort, after quitting their lines: For had they been poſted on the brow of the hill, facing the north and ſouth, the conteſt would have been prolonged, and the aſſailants have ſuſtained a heavier loſs: But the grand error was on the part of the American general; who, as if he had entertained a predilection for a poſt, no longer uſeful, did not withdraw the garriſon on the evening preceding the aſſault.

On the morning of the attack, general Waſhington had been at the fort, in order to give directions to colonel Magaw: He had, however, repaſſed over to the Jerſey ſhore long before the heat of the action. On the other ſide of North River, oppoſite to Fort Waſhington, lay Fort Lee, which occupied next the attention of the commander in chief; inaſmuch as its reduction would ſecure the command of the river, and open a communication with the Jerſeys.

A force under lord Cornwallis penetrates into the Jerſeys.

On the eighteenth of November, lord Cornwallis landed on the Jerſey ſhore, eight miles above Fort Lee, with two battalions of Britiſh and three of Heſſian grenadiers, two of light-infantry, the guards, the chaſſeurs, the royal Highlanders, the thirty-third regiment, and a detachment of the queen's light dragoons. The ſailors of the fleet were employed in dragging the artillery up a rocky road to the ſummit of the river's bank, which ſtretches, in an almoſt perpendicular direction, half a mile from the river. As ſoon as the detachment had landed, lord Cornwallis began his march with great ſecreſy and diſpatch. In all probability he would have ſurpriſed the fort and made the enemy priſoners of war, had not a deſerter informed them of his approach. In conſequence of this information the garriſon retreated in the utmoſt confuſion, leaving their tents ſtanding, and all their proviſions and military ſtores. The next day major-general Vaughan, with the dragoons, grenadiers, and light-infantry, was detached to New Bridge, on the Hakenſack river, which runs into New York Bay. The enemy retreated before them with evident confuſion, leaving behind them, on the roads, a great quantity of ſtores and artillery.

Lord Cornwallis now penetrated into the remoteſt parts of Eaſt and Weſt Jerſey without oppoſition. On the twenty-fourth of November, being reinforced by two brigades of Britiſh troops and a battalion of Highlanders, his lordſhip proceeded to New Bridge, thence to Hakenſack, Newark, Elizabeth Town, and Brunſwick: At this laſt town he was commanded to remain; an order, which ſaved the panic-ſtruck and fleeing army of the Americans from utter ruin. The Rariton is fordable at that place in every receſs of the tide; and had the noble general been left to act at his own diſcretion, if we may form a conjecture from that activity and good ſenſe which diſtinguiſh his uſual conduct, he would have purſued the weakened and alarmed enemy to the Delaware, over which, without falling into his hands, they never could have paſſed. At Brunſwick the Britiſh army halted near a week; the Americans, to the number of three thouſand, with all their heavy cannon and baggage, at Prince Town, ſeventeen, and at Trenton, on the Delaware, twenty-nine miles diſtant. On the ſeventeenth of December, our army marched from Brunſwick at four o'clock in the morning, and about the ſame hour in the afternoon arrived at Prince Town. This place general Waſhington, in perſon, with Stirling's brigade, left not one hour before the Britiſh arrived. At Prince Town the Britiſh general waited ſeventeen hours, marched at nine o'clock in the morning of the eighth, and arrived at Trenton at four o'clock in the afternoon; juſt when the laſt boat of general Waſhington's embarkation croſſed the river, as if he had calculated, it was obſerved, with great accuracy, the exact time neceſſary for his enemy to make his eſcape.

The winter now beginning to ſet in, the army went into winter-quarters. The Britiſh troops were placed between the Delaware and the Hakenſack, the latter of which runs near New York. Trenton, the moſt important poſt and the barrier, was occupied by a brigade of Heſſians, under the command of colonel Ralle; and Bordenton, which formed the angle neareſt the enemy, was placed under the command of count Donop and four battalions of Heſſians. The enemy, in the mean time, were ſuffered to make good their retreat acroſs the Delaware.

While lord Cornwallis was thus ſucceſsful in the Jerſeys, an expedition was undertaken againſt Rhode Iſland by general Clinton and ſir Peter Parker. At their approach the provincials abandoned the iſland, and the Engliſh took peaceable poſſeſſion of it: An unlucky meaſure, as it had no uſe but to keep a great body of troops unemployed during three years.

On account of the ſucceſs of this expedition, the American ſquadron, commanded by commodore Hopkins, was under the neceſſity of retiring up the river Providence, where it remained blocked up and inactive. When the expedition was diſpatched to Rhode Iſland, ſir Henry Clinton ſtrongly urged that he might rather be permitted to conduct it to the Delaware. Poſſibly, had that counſel been adopted, the blow might have been irrecoverable to the Americans: But it is ſaid lord Howe inſiſted on the poſſeſſion of Rhode Iſland for the fleet.

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Tranſactions in the Jerſies—Apparent Errors of the Britiſh Commander—Deſpondence of the Revolters—Vigour of Congreſs—Encouragement to enliſt in the American Army—Congreſs appeal with Effect to the American People.—1776.

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FROM the ſucceſs that had attended the Britiſh army, very beneficial conſequences were expected to reſult. And indeed, when we conſider the comparative ſituation and ſtrength of both armies at this period, ſuch expectations will neither appear too ſanguine nor unreaſonable.

The American army had been raiſed and embodied on the following principle:—Each man enliſted only for a twelvemonth; after which period, he was at liberty to quit the ſervice. Congreſs began now to be convinced that this principle was erroneous; for the ſhortneſs of the term induced many to inliſt at firſt, but it was now become neceſſary to form a ſettled and permanent military eſtabliſhment: Such an eſtabliſhment, however, could not at preſent be accompliſhed. Thoſe who had fulfilled the term of their engagement retired from the ſervice, alleging, as a reaſon for their conduct, that it was incumbent on their fellow-countrymen to bear an equal ſhare in the defence of the common cauſe. Thus the places of thoſe who had acquired a degree of military experience, were filled by perſons who were totally ignorant of the duties of their new ſituation, and who were very inadequate to reſiſt the attacks of the veterans, of which the Britiſh army was compoſed. In conſequence of the ſucceſs of the royaliſts, ſupplies of men were acquired by congreſs but ſlowly. On the other hand, prodigious numbers retired from the ſervice, and the actual ſtrength was reduced from thirty thouſand, of which it conſiſted when general Howe landed on Staten Iſland, to ſcarcely three thouſand. The Britiſh army, at this period, amounted from twenty to thirty thouſand. The men were all healthy and in good ſpirits; ſucceſs had increaſed their military ardour, and they poſſeſſed every thing that could contribute either to their comfort or their convenience. The greateſt expectations were accordingly formed, from ſo great a degree of health, animation, and courage, heightened by ſucceſs: Advantages which, if rightly improved, would naturally lead the way to ſtill farther ſucceſs and glory. The reduction of Forts Waſhington and Lee opened to the Britiſh general a free ingreſs into the Jerſeys. The enemy, panic-ſtruck, flew before him, and yet he would not ſuffer them to be purſued; ordering lord Cornwallis to proceed no further than Brunſwick. By this tenderneſs of operation, the enemy were enabled to make good their retreat, and to croſs the Delaware in ſafety. He thus neglected the opportunity of making the remnant of the American army priſoners of war: Yet, even ſubſequent to this period, his conduct was equally inexplicable. The Americans, though they had thus croſſed the Delaware, were far from feeling themſelves in ſecurity; and had the commander in chief paſſed over the river after them (which he might have done a little above Correll's Ferry), the conſequences would have certainly been fatal to the American cauſe. The panic ſtruck by the ſeveral defeats of the Americans at Long Iſland, New York, and the White Plains, with the progreſs of the army through New Jerſey, had extended itſelf from the military to all the civil departments of the new ſtates, and particularly in the middle colonies. The governor, council, aſſembly,

Blunders of the Britiſh commander.

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bly, and magiſtracy of New Jerſey had deſerted that province. The ſelf-created ſtate in Philadelphia had diſperſed, and the congreſs itſelf, giving up all as loſt, had fled with great precipitation into Maryland. Repeated attempts were made to raiſe the militia of Penſylvania in vain. Three of the principal citizens of Philadelphia, in behalf of the reſt, waited on congreſs before their flight, and boldly informed them, that they intended to meet ſir William Howe, and throw themſelves on his protection. The principal city of North America, and at that time the ſeat of the new government, only waited for the arrival of the Britiſh army, to ſubmit to the mother-country. Other parts, which had, from the commencement of the diſturbances, followed the example of Philadelphia, would have purſued the ſame conduct. In this manner advantages, which, in all probability, would have put a period to the war, were neglected: Nor were theſe the only errors of which the commander in chief was guilty. The great and principal error in ſir William Howe's conduct at this period, was, his dividing his army into ſmall detachments; and thoſe at ſuch a diſtance from each other, as, in caſe of attack, not to be capable of receiving immediate aſſiſtance from the main army: And it was owing to this injudicious arrangement, that the Britiſh army, when in the Jerſeys, were, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, cut up in detail. The manner in which he diſpoſed the army into winter cantonments, was particularly blameable. In the firſt place, the chain of communication which the Britiſh troops occupied from the Delaware to the Hakenſack was too extenſive, and the cantonments too remote from each other; for the ſpace between the two rivers was not leſs than eighty miles. In the next place, foreign troops ought not to have been ſtationed either at Trenton or Bordenton; for they were the barriers to the Jerſeys, and lay neareſt to the enemy. The light-infantry ſhould have occupied theſe poſts;

for the Heſſian troops, underſtanding nothing of the language of the country, were unable to obtain proper intelligence, and, inſtead of conciliating the affections, made themſelves particularly diſagreeable to the natives, by pillaging them, and taking from them the neceſſaries of life, without making them an adequate compenſation. It was farther obſerved, that the four frontier cantonments at Trenton, Bordenton, White Horſe, and Burlington, were the weakeſt, in reſpect of number of troops, in the whole line of cantonments. The poſt at Trenton, oppoſite to which Waſhington lay with the main body of his army, and with boats prepared to croſs the Delaware at his pleaſure, was defended only by twelve hundred Heſſians; and thoſe of Bordenton, White Horſe, and Burlington, by no more than two thouſand. In this weak ſtate, the frontier poſts, the poſts of moſt danger, were left by the commander in chief; while the other poſts were made ſtronger and ſtronger, in proportion to the decreaſe of their diſtance from the enemy, and their conſequent danger; nor were theſe frontier cantonments ſecured from the attacks of the enemy by any works of art, but left without a ſingle redoubt or intrenchment, to which, in caſe of a ſurpriſe, the troops, until they ſhould be relieved from the other poſts, might retreat.

Deſpondence of the revolters.

The affairs of congreſs, in the mean time, continued to droop daily. As ſoon as the Britiſh troops had been diſperſed into winter-quarters, the commander in chief iſſued a proclamation in the name of his brother and himſelf, in which pardon was offered to all perſons, who, within the ſpace of ſixty days, ſhould take the oath of allegiance, and ſubmit to the authority of the Britiſh government. The good effects of this proclamation were ſoon apparent. People from all quarters crowded to take the benefit of it. Whole diſtricts threw down their arms: Nor was this all the diſtreſs that congreſs ſuffered. In addition to their misfortunes, they incurred the following unfortunate loſs :—General Lee, to whom, on the departure of general Waſhington, the command of the troops at Croton's Ferry had devolved, receiving information of the perilous ſituation of general Waſhington, and the defenceleſs condition of the banks of the Delaware on the ſide of Philadelphia, reſolved, notwithſtanding the deſertion in his army, occaſioned by thoſe whoſe terms of ſervice were expired, to croſs the North River, and form a junction with him. Accordingly, on the ſixth of December, he croſſed the North River at King's Ferry, with three thouſand men and ſome pieces of cannon. He continued his route through Morris County, intending to croſs the Delaware to the northward of Trenton. On the thirteenth of December, while his army was encamped in Morris County, he quitted the camp, in order to reconnoitre. In the courſe of this employment he proceeded to the diſtance of three miles from his army, where he ſtopped at a houſe to breakfaſt.

Capture of general Lee.

In order to obtain information of the movements of the army under general Lee, colonel Harcourt had been diſpatched with a detachment of light-horſe: Collecting information, as he advanced into the country, the colonel was induced to proceed farther. In his progreſs he intercepted a countryman, charged with a letter from general Lee, by which he underſtood where he was, and how ſlightly he was guarded. He immediately formed a reſolution of carrying him off; and for that purpoſe made the proper diſpoſitions to prevent his eſcape. He then galloped up to the houſe where the general was at breakfaſt, ſurpriſed the centinels placed to guard it, forced open the door, and made him a priſoner, as well as a French lieutenant-colonel, who had accompanied him. The general was immediately mounted, and, notwithſtanding the extent of country through which he was to be carried, conveyed in ſafety to New York, where the commander in chief then reſided.

The loſs of general Lee was a ſevere blow to the American cauſe. His military knowledge was great, and he had been a ſoldier from his infancy: He had formerly poſſeſſed the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the Britiſh ſervice, and had ſerved all the laſt war in America and Portugal with reputation. His abilities were extenſive, and his knowledge improved by an intimate acquaintance with every nation in Europe. His diſpoſition was reſtleſs and romantic, and the poſſeſſion of an eaſy fortune enabled him to indulge it. Having received ſome affront from the individuals who compoſed the Britiſh adminiſtration, he emigrated to America on the commencement of the preſent diſturbances, and offered his ſervices to congreſs. His abilities and his profeſſional reputation being well known, his offers were accepted with joy, and he was honoured with the rank of major-general. He had been eminently uſeful in diſciplining the American troops, and by his activity and ſkill had greatly contributed to the ſucceſs of the common cauſe. To theſe qualifications, however, the impartiality of hiſtory requires us to add, that he was a man of moſt abandoned principles; that he laughed at every attribute of the Divinity, and turned into ridicule every tenet of religion. No priſoner of equal rank with general Lee being in the hands of the provincials, general Waſhington offered in exchange for him ſix field officers: General Howe, however, replied, that general Lee, having deſerted from the ſervice of Great Britain, could not be conſidered as a priſoner of war. To this general Waſhington rejoined, that, having on the commencement of the troubles reſigned his commiſſion as a Britiſh officer, general Lee could not be ſuppoſed to be a deſerter. The commander in chief, however, refuſed to releaſe him; which occaſioned the Americans to treat ſeveral of their priſoners with an unuſual degree of ſeverity and rigour.

Notwith-

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Vigour of congreſs.

Notwithſtanding the perilous ſituation of their affairs, congreſs were not diſpirited. They proceeded with the utmoſt vigour and activity to repair their loſſes, and to remedy the defect in their military ſyſtem. They ordered a new army to be raiſed, the ſoldiers of which, inſtead of ſerving one year, ſhould be bound for three, or during the continuance of the preſent diſturbances. This army was to conſiſt of eighty-eight battalions, to be furniſhed and maintained by the reſpective colonies, according to the following proportion: Virginia and Maſſachuſet were to furniſh fifteen battalions each; Penſylvania, twelve—North Carolina, nine—South Carolina, ſix—Connecticut, eight—Maryland, eight—Rhode Iſland, two—Delaware, one—New Hampſhire, three—and Georgia, one. New York and Jerſey being partly in the enemy's poſſeſſion, were only aſſeſſed at four battalions each.

Encouragement to enliſt in the American army.

As an inducement to men to enliſt, the following liberal offers were made: Each ſoldier was to have a bounty of twenty dollars, beſides an allotment of lands at the end of the war to all who ſurvived, or to the families of thoſe who ſhould fall in the ſervice. The allotment of a common ſoldier was to be one hundred acres—of an enſign, one hundred and fifty—of a lieutenant, two hundred—a captain, three hundred—a major, four hundred—a lieutenant-colonel, four hundred and fifty—and a colonel, five hundred. This allotment, however, was not to extend to thoſe who enliſted only for three years. In addition to theſe offers, congreſs forbad any one to purchaſe the allotment of lands belonging to another, in order that by this prohibition each ſoldier might procure for himſelf a decent maintenance when the public ſhould no longer want his profeſſional aſſiſtance. In order to provide for the ſupport of ſuch a large body as was propoſed to be raiſed, congreſs borrowed a loan of five millions of dollars at four per cent. intereſt.

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Congreſs appeal with effect to the American people.

The Britiſh troops at this period were maſters of the Jerſeys, and ſeparated from Penſylvania, and the capital Philadelphia, only by the Delaware. In this critical ſituation, congreſs thought it adviſable to publiſh an appeal to the inhabitants of the ſeveral colonies, in order to remind them of their aſſurances of protection and ſupport. In this appeal they were entreated not to forget that activity and unanimity were abſolutely neceſſary to enſure welfare and ſucceſs to the common cauſe. They travelled over the ſame grounds they had formerly done, with reſpect to a recapitulation of the grievances they had ſuffered, and the manner in which they had been treated by the mother-country. They inſiſted that nothing ſhort of an abſolute ſubmiſſion would ſatisfy the demands of their enemies, and they deſired an anſwer to this queſtion: Which of the two alternatives was preferable—reſiſtance or ſlavery? The appeal next adverted to recent tranſactions, and contended that the ſucceſs of the Britiſh arms had been greatly exaggerated, and dearly purchaſed. In concluſion, congreſs aſſured them of the aſſiſtance of foreign powers, and exhorted them to prepare for a vigorous defence of thoſe objects which muſt be dear to every man. This appeal produced the deſired effect. The people of America determined to contribute every poſſible aſſiſtance to the common cauſe; and for that purpoſe exerted themſelves with aſtoniſhing activity in procuring reinforcements of men for the army under the command of general Waſhington.

Winter was now approaching faſt. The Delaware was expected to be ſoon frozen, and it was not doubted but that the Britiſh troops only waited for this event in order to croſs it and attack Philadelphia. The friends of congreſs, therefore, with good reaſon, began to entertain apprehenſions for the ſafety of that body, which on this account retired to Baltimore in Maryland. The city of Philadelphia by their departure was thrown into confuſion. As long as congreſs reſided there,

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there, thoſe who were attached to Great Britain were under the neceſſity of ſubmitting to a power which they could not reſiſt. The operation of this cauſe had no ſooner ceaſed than they avowed their attachment openly, and uſed every endeavour to acquire freſh adherents to the Britiſh cauſe. Their attempts were not unſucceſsful. Many of the inhabitants quitted Philadelphia, and claimed the benefit of the proclamation recently made by the commiſſioners. Others, who, though well affected to Great Britain, did not think proper to leave the city, made uſe of every artifice to prevent its being put into a proper ſtate of defence, according to the directions of congreſs before their departure. Theſe attempts occaſioned violent animoſities and diſturbances; to put an end to which, general Waſhington was reduced to the neceſſity of diſpatching a conſiderable detachment of the trivial force which now remained under his command.

The ſituation of the Americans was now almoſt deſperate. General Waſhington, though reinforced by the junction of general Lee's army, had not five thouſand men under his command; many of whom were raw and inexperienced, and all were diſpirited by diſappointment and defeat. An hoſtile army, fluſhed with conqueſt and ſucceſs, lay on the oppoſite ſide of the Delaware, within twenty miles of him. Winter was approaching faſt. The Delaware would be frozen; and the only obſtacle that prevented the enemy from attacking him would then be removed. Thus ſituated, he reſolved to adopt a deſperate expedient; and indeed the neceſſity of the caſe left him only the alternative of adopting ſuch a meaſure, or of ſubmitting to the enemy. He knew the manner in which the Britiſh army was diſpoſed; that it was ſtationed in extenſive cantonments; and therefore could not eaſily be condenſed, in a ſhort period, into one body capable of reſiſting the attack of the men under his command. Beſides, he wiſhed to obtain for Philadelphia a temporary ſecurity, by inducing the enemy to quit the vicinity of the Delaware.

General Waſhington ſurpriſes the Britiſh troops at Trenton.

It has been already ſaid that the barriers at Trenton and Bordenton were defended by Heſſian troops under the command of colonel Rhalle and count Donop. Theſe poſts general Waſhington determined to attack. But in order to draw colonel Donop from his poſt at Bordenton, and to prevent him from affording any ſupport to Colonel Rhalle, at the time of the intended aſſault, he ſent a corps of four hundred and fifty militia, many of whom were boys picked up in Philadelphia, and the counties of Glouceſter and Salem, to Mount Holly, with orders not to fight, but to take to flight the moment when the effect of the manœuvre ſhould take place. The plan ſucceeded. Colonel Donop marched againſt this inſignificant detachment of the American force, with the whole of his party, to the number of two thouſand men, with the exception of eighty, left at Bordenton, down to Mount Holly, twelve miles from his own ſtation, and eighteen from Trenton, the poſt he ought to have been near, for the purpoſe of ſupporting it in caſe of danger. The ſmall American party, on his approach, immediately fled and diſperſed; and yet Donop, inſtead of returning ſtraight to ſupport colonel Rhalle, loitered two days in the neighbourhood of Burlington, without the ſmalleſt ſemblance of neceſſity. Waſhington diſcerned the fit moment for enterpriſe, and embraced it. He divided his troops into three parts, which were to aſſemble on the banks of the Delaware on the night of the twenty-fifth of December. Two of theſe diviſions were led by generals Irwing and Cadwallader. The third, which was the principal diviſion, was commanded by himſelf in perſon. It conſiſted of two thouſand five hundred men, and was furniſhed with a few field-pieces. General Waſhington was attended by generals Sullivan and Green. The firſt diviſion was ordered to paſs the river at Trenton

Ferry, a mile below the town—the ſecond near Bordenton—and the third at Mackenzie's Ferry, nine miles above Trenton. The Delaware had already begun to be frozen, and the boats that carried this laſt diviſion found it difficult to make their way through the ice. Other inconveniencies which the men encountered after they landed delayed their march ſo long, that they did not arrive at the deſtined place before eight o'clock on the morning of the twenty-ſixth of December. As ſoon as general Waſhington had landed he divided his men into two detachments, which were ordered to proceed to Trenton by the two roads that led to it; the upper, or Pennington road; and the lower, or River road.

The Heſſians, ſince they had been quartered at Trenton, had given way to a laxity of diſcipline, and an inattention that proceeded from a knowledge of the enervated ſituation of the enemy, and of the improbability of their adopting any offenſive meaſures againſt them. It is not therefore wonderful that they neglected the means of ſecuring themſelves from a ſurpriſe, nor that the Americans were ſuffered to proceed on their march without moleſtation. The firſt intelligence that the Heſſians received of their approach was from an advanced poſt in the upper road, and the out-guards on the lower road, both of which were under the neceſſity of retreating into the town with the utmoſt celerity. Rhalle, with all poſſible ſpeed, endeavoured to collect his troops during the night; but many of his men were abſent on pillaging parties, and thoſe who were on the ſpot were more buſily employed in ſecuring their plunder in waggons than in putting the town in a proper ſtate of defence. The enemy took advantage of this confuſion, and poſſeſſed themſelves of the different avenues, where they placed their field-pieces, and thence began to pour a heavy fire upon the diſmayed and aſtoniſhed Heſſians. By activity and diligence Rhalle aſſembled the beſt part of his three regiments, with which he charged the enemy with great courage, but receiving a mortal wound in the commencement of the engagement, his troops refuſed to continue it, and endeavoured to retreat to Prince Town. Being diſappointed, however, in this attempt, they were under the neceſſity of ſurrendering priſoners of war. The number of killed and wounded on both ſides was inconſiderable. The number of priſoners amounted to near one thouſand. The two other diviſions of general Waſhington's army were not ſo ſucceſsful. The quantity of ice in the Delaware was ſo great, where they attempted to croſs it, that they found the taſk impracticable. Had this not been the caſe, their ſucceſs would have been complete; for theſe diviſions would have prevented the chaſſeurs and light-horſe from eſcaping to Bordenton, and alſo have made themſelves maſters of all the cantonments on the ſide of the river. General Waſhington, in conſequence of this failure in the other diviſions, judged it improper to proſecute his intentions further. He therefore repaſſed the Delaware on the evening of the twenty-ſixth, carrying with him his priſoners, and all the artillery of which he had made himſelf maſter at Trenton.

The Americans had hitherto beheld the Heſſians with fear and diſmay. They knew that they were veterans, and in the higheſt ſtate of diſcipline. This victory, however, gained over thoſe ſtrangers, animated them to a ſurpriſing degree, and revived that ſpirit which had for ſome time been decreaſing. The Heſſians were diſpatched to Philadelphia, and carried through the different ſtreets of that city, in order to convince the inhabitants that the ſucceſs of the American arms was not, as many induſtriouſly ſuggeſted, pretended or fictitious. The loſs of Trenton was very generally imputed to the miſconduct of the commander in chief. It was alleged that the principal barrier ſhould not have been committed to the care of foreigners; that it was extremely reprehenſible to neglect throwing up ſome defenſible works in order to prevent a ſurpriſe; and that the extent of the cantonments was ſo enlarged, as already obſerved, as to render every idea of conveying aſſiſtance from one cantonment to another totally impracticable. Rhalle, though brave, was totally unfit for the ſtation he held. He was obſtinate, paſſionate, and inceſſantly intoxicated with ſtrong liquors. The commander in chief affected to throw the blame of the appointment of Rhalle to the command at Trenton on general De Heiſter.

Sir William Howe has been very ſeverely cenſured for having given the command of this poſt to a foreigner, unacquainted with the language, cuſtoms, or manners, of the people. He was liable to be impoſed on by the country people in any information he might want; and little could be expected from colonel Rhalle in the way of conciliation accompanying that of armed force, the only way in which final ſucceſs was to be expected. For whoever caſts his eye on the map of the vaſt continent of America muſt readily perceive that force of arms alone, unaccompanied by conciliatory meaſures, muſt be wild and chimerical. When the enemy had arrived in the town the troops in the Britiſh ſervice were ſolely occupied in ſecuring their plunder in waggons, and many of them were actually made priſoners while engaged in this ſhameful avocation.

Though the ſucceſs of general Waſhington, in his attack on Trenton, had ſurpaſſed his moſt ſanguine expectations, he yet dreaded every moment the approach of the troops under general Leſlie, from Prince Town, and of colonel Donop from Mount Holly, and fled with the utmoſt precipitation to his winter-quarters on the weſt

ſide

ſide of the Delaware. Of taking up quarters in New Jerſey he never entertained a thought: Not doubting but the Britiſh commander, with a force ſo greatly ſuperior to his own, would reoccupy the important poſts on the Delaware, and fortify them ſo ſtrongly as to put it out of his power to retake them. Nor was Waſhington, as yet, ſufficiently acquainted with the character of ſir William Howe, to ſuppoſe it poſſible that this commander might purſue a different line of conduct. To recover and fortify his chain of poſts on the Delaware was neceſſary, in order to keep alive the panic already diffuſed throughout all the colonies, and ſupport the ſpirits of the well-affected to government. It was neceſſary to the preſervation of Weſt New Jerſey, juſt conquered: It was neceſſary, in order to convince the enemy that the Britiſh troops, although they might be ſurpriſed, were not to be intimidated or diſcouraged from action: And, finally, it was practicable without danger, as thoſe troops were, at that criſis, ſix times more in number, as well as ſuperior in point of military diſcipline and experience, to the feeble force that oppoſed them. But inſtead of an immediate movement of the two neareſt corps, to regain what had been ſo ſtrangely loſt, colonel Donop abandoned his poſt, and haſtened to join general Leſlie at Prince Town. Theſe officers, united, were much ſuperior in force to general Waſhington: Yet, though there was no enemy in New Jerſey to diſturb them, they were permitted to remain for ſome time wholly inactive. The two main barriers of the Britiſh power on the Delaware being left unguarded and defenceleſs, and the conduct of the Britiſh commander betraying manifeſt irreſolution, if not infatuation, general Waſhington, after an interval of eight days, was encouraged again to croſs the Delaware, and march to Trenton at the head of four thouſand men.

The

The Britiſh commander in chief was now ſeriouſly alarmed. The Britiſh and auxiliary troops, with the forces at Brunſwick under general Grant, advanced to Prince Town; and lord Cornwallis, who was on the point of ſailing for England, was immediately ordered to leave New York, and take the command of the Jerſey army. As ſoon as his lordſhip joined general Grant, he marched to attack the enemy at Trenton. General Waſhington, on his approach, retired from the town, and croſſing a rivulet at the back of it, poſted himſelf on ſome high grounds, ſeemingly with a determination of defending them. Both armies immediately commenced a ſevere cannonade, which continued till night. Lord Cornwallis determined to renew the attack next morning, but general Waſhington reſolved not to hazard a battle. About two in the morning of the third of January he retreated with profound ſilence, leaving his fires burning, his pickets advanced, and ſeveral ſmall parties for the purpoſe of guarding the paſſage of the rivulet. Quitting the main road, he took a large circuit through Allenſtown, and proceeded to Prince Town, which place he intended to ſurpriſe. When lord Cornwallis quitted Prince Town, he left lieutenant-colonel Mawhood to defend it with the ſeventeenth, the fortieth, and the fifty-fifth regiments. On the third of January however, orders were tranſmitted him to march with the ſeventeenth and fifty-fifth regiments to Maidenhead, a village midway between Prince Town and Trenton. General Waſhington had uſed ſuch expedition in his march, that at ſun-riſe his van came up with colonel Mawhood's detachment, which had juſt begun its march. The morning was ſo foggy, that the enemy were at firſt ſuppoſed to be Heſſians: Colonel Mawhood ſoon diſcovering that it was part of the American army, immediately conjectured that general Waſhington had retreated from lord Cornwallis, and was on his march to Prince Town. A brook ſeparated

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rated the two armies. By cutting away a bridge over it, the detachment might have avoided an engagement, and ſecured their paſſage to Maidenhead. The commanding officer however, conceiving that ſome advantage might reſult from delaying the enemy, reſolved to hazard an action. The fogginefs of the morning, and the woods, prevented him from diſcovering, at firſt, the number of the enemy. Poſſeſſing himſelf of ſome high ground that led to Prince Town, he ordered the waggons to return to that place, and directed the fortieth regiment to come to his aſſiſtance. When the enemy advanced he poured a heavy diſcharge of artillery upon them, which did conſiderable execution, on account of their not having yet formed in a regular line. For a ſhort ſpace of time a briſk cannonade was carried on on both ſides. The van of the enemy beginning then to be in ſome diſorder, the ſeventeenth regiment ruſhed forward with fixed bayonets, and drove them back to a ravine which ſeparated them from their rear. Great ſlaughter enſued in the endeavour of the enemy to repaſs this line. It was ſaid that, had the fifty-fifth regiment ſupported the ſeventeenth with a proper degree of ſpirit, and had the fortieth regiment obeyed the orders tranſmitted them to march to the aſſiſtance of the other two regiments, the enemy would have totally failed in their deſigns. But theſe ſeem to have been only the excuſes with which it was attempted to cover the want of a regular combined diſpoſition for the attack: A neglect naturally imputable to the unexpectedneſs of ſuch a meeting with the American army. The ſeventeenth regiment, ſevered by their ardour from the reſt of the Britiſh detachment, cut their way through the enemy, and purſued their march to Maidenhead. This was one of the moſt gallant exploits during the whole war. Captain Scot, who led that regiment, received very deſerved applauſe for his conduct on that occaſion. The Engliſh ſuffered conſiderably in killed and wounded, and the Americans much more. Among the killed, on the part of the latter, was a general Mercer, whoſe loſs was extremely lamented. The fortieth and fifty-fifth regiments being unable to make good their way to Maidenhead, effected a retreat to Brunſwick, with the loſs of near one half their number. The Americans at the ſame time took poſſeſſion of Prince Town. As ſoon as daylight appeared, on the third of January, lord Cornwallis diſcovered the retreat of the American army, and entertaining apprehenſions for the ſafety of Brunſwick, which was in a defenceleſs ſituation, reſolved to march inſtantly to its relief. On the approach of his lordſhip, general Waſhington retreated from Prince Town, and proceeded to Brunſwick. Brigadier Matthews, the commanding officer of the garriſon, being informed of his approach, took the precaution to ſend away the immenſe quantity of ſtores that had been placed there for the uſe of the army, and with his ſmall detachment poſted himſelf on ſome high grounds commanding the town, intending to check the progreſs of the enemy, in order to cover the retreat of the ſtore-waggons, which were hurrying along the Rariton to a bridge about two miles diſtant from the town. The captive general Lee, who was confined in Brunſwick, was at the ſame time diſpatched acroſs the Rariton in company with theſe waggons.

Notwithſtanding the expedition that general Waſhington uſed in his march to Brunſwick, yet his rear was hard preſſed by the van of the Engliſh army. He therefore reſolved to relinquiſh his deſigns on Brunſwick, and croſſed the Millſtone river, breaking down the bridge at King's Town to evade a purſuit.

The army under lord Cornwallis, haraſſed and fatigued, declined purſuing the enemy, and proceeded to Brunſwick. Whilſt Cornwallis, for the neceſſary refreſhment of his troops, remained in this town, general Waſhington over-ran both Eaſt and Weſt Jerſey, ſpreading his army over the Rariton, and penetrating into Eſſex County, where he made himſelf maſter of the coaſt oppoſite to Staten Iſland, by ſeizing Newark, Elizabeth Town, and Woodbridge. His head-quarters he fixed at Morris Town. This place is ſituated amongſt hills which are difficult of acceſs. A fine country was in his rear, whence he could draw ſupplies, and through which he could at any time ſecure an eaſy paſſage over the Delaware.

By ſuch judicious movements did general Waſhington not only ſave Philadelphia and Penſylvania, but recover the greateſt part of the Jerſeys, in defiance of an army infinitely ſuperior to his, in diſcipline, reſources, and numbers. Of all their recent extenſive poſſeſſions in the Jerſeys, the Engliſh retained now only the poſts of Brunſwick and Amboy; the firſt ſituated on the banks of the Rariton; the ſecond on a point of land at its mouth. Both places have an open communication with New York by ſea.

Inactivity of the Britiſh army.

In all theſe tranſactions there was ſomething inexplicable, to the rational part of mankind. They could not, by any well-founded arguments, defend the manner in which the troops were cantoned. They could not account for ſo ſlender an eſtabliſhment being left on the two barriers of Trenton and Bordenton. At the firſt place Rhalle had only twelve hundred Heſſians; at the ſecond, count Donop's force exceeded not two thouſand. The neglecting to fortify theſe poſts neareſt the enemy, and moſt in danger, ſeemed to them unpardonable: The placing the Britiſh in the greateſt numbers fartheſt from the enemy; the not retaking the poſts on the banks of the Delaware, which poſts covered the whole province of Jerſey: All theſe circumſtances were generally animadverted on with much ſeverity. Men of plain ſenſe could not underſtand why the commander in chief, at the head of thirty thouſand veteran troops, ſhould ſuffer an undiſciplined army, not amounting to a ſixth part of his own numbers, to remain in a province ſo lately in his firm poſſeſſion; and not only to remain there, but to compel him to abandon that province. When the adherents of adminiſtration reflected on the dreadful conſequences that muſt ariſe from this erroneous conduct, they were reduced to a ſituation of grief and deſpair.

General Waſhington, with his uſual ſagacity, perceived that, during the winter of 1776, his ſituation required enterpriſe and daring expedients; which, while they haraſſed the Britiſh army, would keep his little force in action, and prevent the minds of his men from yielding to the fatal effects of deſpondence. Small as his force was, he always poſted himſelf near the Britiſh army. He was inceſſantly inſulting, ſurpriſing, and cutting off their pickets and advanced guards; firm and undaunted amidſt want, inclemency of weather, and difficulty and danger of every kind. Amboy and Brunſwick were in a manner beſieged. In this unfavourable and indeciſive warfare it is ſuppoſed that more of the Britiſh were ſacrificed than would have been loſt in an attack on general Waſhington's whole force, which, at this period, was leſs than four thouſand men, moſt of them undiſciplined and inexperienced, and ſuch as might have been defeated and diſperſed by a fifth part of the Britiſh army.

Sir William Howe ſuffered ſuch an enemy, ſo greatly inferior to his own, as then oppoſed him, to remain for ſix months within twenty-five miles of his head-quarters, without moleſtation, and without taking any means to revenge the inſults that were offered daily to the army under his command.

It has been alleged in defence of ſir William Howe's inactivity and paſſive demeanour, that he had to attack an enemy, poſted in a country containing numberleſs inacceſſible poſts, and ſtrong natural barriers formed by the various combinations of woods, mountains, rivers, lakes, and marſhes; and that theſe circumſtances might be ſaid to fight the battles of the inhabitants of ſuch countries in a defenſive war. Allowing the validity of this argument, ſtill it will neither acquit the commander in chief of the charge of impolicy, in not croſſing the Delaware after the capture of Forts Lee and Waſhington, nor in the ſeveral other inſtances already mentioned.

Well-timed proclamation by general Waſhington.

Theſe ſuccefsful operations on the part of the Americans were immediately followed by a proclamation, in the name of general Waſhington, abſolving all thoſe who had been induced to take the oaths of allegiance tendered by the Britiſh commiſſioners, and promiſing them protection on condition of their ſubſcribing to a form of oath preſcribed by congreſs. The effects of this proclamation were almoſt inſtantaneous. The inhabitants of the Jerſeys, who had conceived a violent hatred to the Britiſh army, on account of their unchecked courſe of plundering, inſtantly renounced their allegiance to Great Britain, and attached themſelves to the cauſe of America. Several who were reſolved to avenge their wrongs, joined the army under general Waſhington, while others rendered equal ſervice to the ſide to which they attached themſelves, by ſupplying the American army with proviſions and fuel, and by conveying intelligence of the operations of the Britiſh army at Brunſwick and Amboy.

In conſequence of their aſſiſtance, general Waſhington was enabled to haraſs the Engliſh greatly. The excurſions which the garriſon of Brunſwick made for forage, were often attended with fatal conſequences; and as the American army had extended their line of cantonments from Morris Town to Woodbridge, within three miles of Amboy, the proviſions that were forced to be conveyed by land to Brunſwick were often cut off by parties of the enemy, who were always on the watch, and to whom intelligence was regularly conveyed by thoſe perſons who inhabited the ſpace of ground between Amboy and Brunſwick. General Howe too, as has been obſerved, had iſſued proclamations, calling upon the inhabitants to join him, in ſupporting his majeſty's government, and promiſing

Howe's conduct contraſted with that of Waſhington.

them

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them protection in both perſon and property. But no ſooner had the army entered the Jerſeys, than the buſineſs (we ſay buſineſs, for it was a perfect trade) of plunder began. The friend and the foe, from the hand of rapine, ſhared alike. The people's property was taken, without being paid for, or even a receipt given, which would have been evidence that ſuch property was taken; leaving the payment or non-payment to be determined by the iſſue of the war, and the political merit of the parties. The Britiſh army foraged indiſcriminately, procuring conſiderable ſupplies of hay, oats, Indian corn, cattle, and horſes; which were never or but very ſeldom paid for. Nevertheleſs the expences of the extraordinaries of the army were rapidly increaſing, and ultimately ſwelled to a moſt unparalleled and alarming amount.

Before the diſaſter at Trenton, the people of the Jerſeys were well affected to his majeſty's government. Numbers joined the royal army; and two brigades of provincials were raiſed for the Britiſh ſervice, who, on many ſubſequent occaſions, diſcharged their duty with all the zeal of good ſubjects, and the bravery of veteran ſoldiers. But when the people found that the promiſed protection was not afforded them; that their property was ſeized, and moſt wantonly deſtroyed; that, in many inſtances, their families were inſulted, ſtripped of their beds, with other furniture—nay, even of their very wearing apparel; they then determined to try the other ſide, truſting that they would at leaſt, at one period or other, receive compenſation for the ſupplies taken from them for the uſe of the American army. And it is but juſtice to ſay that the Americans never took any thing from their friends, but in caſes of neceſſity; in which caſes they uniformly gave receipts for what they did take, always living, as long as they could, upon their enemies; and never ſuffering their troops to plunder their friends with impunity. But at the ſame time it is to be noticed, that the American troops were ſuffered to plunder the loyaliſts, and to exerciſe with impunity every act of barbarity on that unfortunate claſs of people; frequently inflicting on them even ſcourges and ſtripes.

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In this manner ended the campaign of 1776; in the courſe of which it has been ſufficiently ſeen, how advantages were neglected on the one part, and trivial occurrences rendered highly beneficial on the other; and, what activity and perſeverance can effect, even with inferiority of ſtrength, when oppoſed to negligence and inertneſs.

CHAP. IX.

Proceedings of Congreſs—They determine to renounce all Dependence on Great Britain—Sketch of a new American Government.

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IN the midſt of theſe operations in the Jerſeys, congreſs were not idle. Though they could not afford at preſent much aſſiſtance to general Waſhington, they reſolved to ſtrengthen the band of union between the thirteen colonies, by putting the laſt hand to the famous ſyſtem of confederacy.

American congreſs determine to renounce all dependence on Great Britain.

Hitherto their ſyſtem of conduct had proceeded upon certain ſuppoſitions of a reconciliation with the parent ſtate. Thoſe ſuppoſitions, however, were now ſuperſeded by the determination that had been made to renounce all dependence upon Great Britain; and to erect the colonies into ſovereign ſtates. In conſequence of this determination, a permanent form of government, relinquiſhing every idea of a ſubordinate connection with the parent ſtate, was abſolutely neceſſary to be ſettled. A committee appointed to prepare a new form of government, in the outſet of their compoſition, made the following alteration in the appellation of the colonies: Whereas they had hitherto ſtyled themſelves the United Colonies; they now aſſumed the name of the United States of America. The conſtitution propoſed by this committee, was in ſubſtance as follows:

Sketch of a new American government.

1. That each colony ſhould bind itſelf to aſſiſt the reſt, and to repel the attacks that might be made upon them on any pretence whatever.

2. That each ſtate ſhould poſſeſs the power of regulating its own internal government, and of making laws in all caſes; provided they did not interfere with the general ſafety and welfare of the common cauſe.

3. That all negotiations, alliances, and treaties, ſhould be ſubmitted to the conſideration of the United States aſſembled in general congreſs; and that no ſtate in particular was to infringe the proviſions of this article on any pretence whatever.

4. That it ſhould be criminal in any perſon, poſſeſſing authority under the United States, to accept preſents, gratuities, employments, or titles, from any foreign power.

5. That no titles of nobility ſhould be conferred by the general aſſembly of the United States, or the aſſembly of any particular ſtates.

6. That none of the ſtates were to form alliances or private treaties among themſelves, without the conſent of the United States.

7. That no duties or impoſts were to be eſtabliſhed in any ſtate, which might tend to infringe the proviſions of any treaty which the general aſſembly might think proper to enter into with any foreign power.

8. That no particular ſtate was to increaſe its naval eſtabliſhment beyond the number preſcribed for each ſtate by the general aſſembly. That the military eſtabliſhment ſhould be governed by the ſame regulation. That a well-diſciplined militia was to be kept up in every ſtate, adequately armed and equipped; and that the public magazines ſhould always contain a ſufficient number of field-pieces, tents, and other neceſſary implements of war.

9. That all officers of the rank of colonel, and under, ſhould be appointed by the legiſlative body of each ſtate.

10. That the expences of war ſhould be defrayed out of the general treaſury of the United States.

11. That in order to conſtitute a public fund, adequate to any particular exigencies, each of the ſtates ſhould contribute a certain ſum, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants (Indians excepted). That this number might be now preciſely determined, it was provided that the inhabitants of each ſtate ſhould be numbered every three years. This enumeration was then to be ſent to the general aſſembly of the United States.

12. The aſſeſſment determined on by this enumeration was to be paid by taxes levied by the authority of the legiſlative body of each ſtate.

13. When any queſtion was ſubmitted to the deciſion of the general aſſembly, by any particular ſtate, that deciſion was to be binding.

14. War was not to be commenced without the conſent of the general aſſembly, except in caſes of invaſion, or where it was known that an invaſion was intended, and the danger was too preſſing to obtain the conſent of the general aſſembly.

15. Commiſſions to veſſels or letters of marque and repriſal were not to be granted by any particular ſtate, till after a declaration of war by the general aſſembly.

16. For the general intereſt of the United States, each ſtate was to nominate a certain number of delegates, who were to meet at Philadelphia on the firſt Monday in November of each year.

17. To each ſtate was to be attached the power of recalling their delegates, at any part of the year, and of appointing others in their room. The delegates of each ſtate were to be maintained at the expence of that ſtate, during the ſitting of the general aſſembly, and alſo as long as they were members of the council of ſtate.

18. Each ſtate was to have a vote for the deciſion of queſtions in the general aſſembly.

19. To the general aſſembly alone was to belong the right of deciding on peace and war; to determine in all caſes of capture, whether by ſea or land; to conſtitute tribunals for the trial of piracies; to appoint and receive ambaſſadors; to negotiate treaties; to decide the differences between each ſtate; to coin money; to regulate commerce; to treat in all matters concerning the Indians; to appoint general officers of the land and naval forces; and to direct the operations of both in time of war.

20. A council of ſtate was to be appointed by the general aſſembly, and alſo ſuch committees and civil officers as ſhould be neceſſary to diſpatch the public buſineſs during their ſitting. The public affairs were to be under the direction of the council of ſtate, after the riſing of the general aſſembly.

21. The preſident and other officers were to be appointed by the general aſſembly, to which were to belong the right and power of fixing the ſums neceſſary to be raiſed for the public defence, and of determining the application of thoſe ſums; of borrowing money and of creating bills; of building and fitting out fleets; of deciding on the number of troops neceſſary to be raiſed; of calling upon each ſtate for its proportion of military aſſiſtance, and of requiring it to arm and equip the forces raiſed in obedience to this requiſition, in a proper manner.

22. The general aſſembly was to be allowed the power of demanding of any particular ſtate more than its juſt proportion; and compliance with this power was not to be refuſed, unleſs the legiſlative body of the ſtate ſhould deem ſuch compliance to be injurious to its ſecurity and ſafety.

23. The general aſſembly was not to exerciſe any of the powers contained in the twenty-firſt article, unleſs nine of the thirteen ſtates ſhould conſent to it. On every point whatever, a deciſion ſhould be made by the majority of the United States.

24. No delegate was to be choſen for more than three years out of ſix.

25. No perſon poſſeſſed of any employment, or receiving a ſalary, or wages, was eligible to the office of a delegate.

26. The general aſſembly was to publiſh, monthly, a journal of their proceedings, except what might relate to treaties, alliances, or military operations, which it ſhould be deemed neceſſary to keep ſecret.

27. The council of ſtate was to conſiſt of one delegate of each ſtate, choſen by the other delegates of the ſaid ſtate.

Article 28th related to the powers of the council of ſtate, which, during the adjournment of the general aſſembly, were ſimilar to thoſe allowed to the general aſſembly.

29. If Canada ſhould be willing to accede to the preſent ſyſtem of confederation, it was to be allowed all the benefits of it, and to be admitted into the union. No other colony, however, was to be admitted but by the conſent of nine of the United States.

The foregoing articles were to be ſubmitted to the legiſlative bodies of each ſtate. If they approved of them, they were to authoriſe their delegates to ratify them in the general aſſembly: Thus ratified, the proviſions of them were to be implicitly obeyed by all, and an eternal union was thus to be eſtabliſhed. Such were the conditions of this celebrated treaty of union. After they had been prepared by the committee, they were ſubmitted to congreſs, and ſolemnly diſcuſſed. Having received the approbation of congreſs, they were tranſmitted to the different colonies, and then ratified by all the delegates, who ſigned them on the fourth of October 1776.

Such cool, deliberate, and reſolute conduct was the more remarkable, that congreſs had now to contend with an additional enemy. This enemy was the Indians.—It has been ſhewn how unſucceſſful every attempt had hitherto proved to detach the ſouthern colonies from the ſupport of the common cauſe to their own immediate defence, by involving them in civil war through the means of the Regulators and Highland emigrants in the Carolinas, or of the negroes in Virginia. It has alſo been ſhewn that the provincials adduced theſe attempts as charges againſt their ſeveral governors. Unſucceſsful, however, as theſe endeavours had hitherto been, the conſequences that would reſult from ſuch a plan of operations were too important to be neglected. Britiſh agents were again employed in engaging the Indians to make a diverſion, and to enter the ſouthern colonies on their back and defenceleſs parts. Accuſtomed to their diſpoſitions and habits of mind, the agents found but little difficulty in bringing them over to their purpoſe by dint of preſents, and hopes of ſpoil and plunder. The plan of action that was to be adopted in conſequence of this conſent, on the part of the Indians, was as follows: A large body of men was to be ſent to Weſt Florida, in order to penetrate through the territories of the Creeks, Cherokees, and Checkeſaw Indians. The warriors of theſe nations were to join the body, and the Carolinas and Virginia were immediately to be invaded. At the ſame time the attention of the coloniſts was to be diverted by another formidable naval and military force, which was to make an impreſſion on the ſea-coaſts.

But this undertaking was not to depend ſolely on the Britiſh army and the Indians. It was intended to engage the aſſiſtance of the white inhabitants of the back ſettlements, who were known to be well affected to the Britiſh cauſe. Circular letters were accordingly ſent to thoſe perſons by Mr. Stuart, the principal agent for Indian affairs, requiring not only the well-affected, but alſo thoſe who wiſhed to preſerve their properties from the miſeries of civil war, to repair to the royal ſtandard, as ſoon as it ſhould be erected in the Cherokee country, with all their horſes, cattle, and proviſions, for which they ſhould be liberally paid. They were

likewiſe

CHAP. IX. 1776. likewiſe required, in order to inſure their ſafety, and to diſtinguiſh them from the king's enemies, to ſubſcribe a written declaration of their allegiance. Theſe operations were conducted with ſuch plauſibility, that conſiderable hopes were entertained of their ſucceſs. Already had a large number of the Indians declared in favour of the Engliſh; and even the Six Nations, who had ſworn to the obſervance of a ſtrict neutrality, violated their oaths, and committed ſeveral acts of hoſtility. Matters were not yet ripe for execution, when the Creeks, a bloody and cruel race, eager to partake of the expected plunder, reſolved not to await the arrival of the Britiſh troops, but to commence the inſurrection immediately. They proceeded in the execution of their intentions with incredible barbarity; but finding that they were not ſupported, and beginning to conſider that they ſhould be overpowered if they acted ſingly, they pauſed in their career, and, in a conſultation among the chiefs, it was determined to deſiſt from hoſtilities, and to ſue for a peace with the coloniſts. In the preſent ſituation of affairs their requeſt was eaſily complied with, and they returned to their native poſſeſſions.

The Cherokees, ignorant of the determination of the Creek Indians, ſent them word, as ſoon as they had completed their preparations, that they were going to march againſt the enemy, and intreated their aſſiſtance. The Creeks, however, returned for anſwer, "that the Cherokees had plucked the thorn out of their foot, "and were welcome to keep it." The Cherokees, notwithſtanding this repulſe, proceeded to invade the back ſettlements of Virginia and the Carolinas with inconceivable fury and barbarity; but their career was ſoon checked. The inhabitants of the provinces of Carolina and Virginia immediately aſſembled a large militia, which marched with great expedition to the relief of the back ſettlers. The Cherokees were ſoon driven from the places of which they had poſſeſſed themſelves, and purſued into their own country, where their towns, their habitations, and their fields were laid waſte, and a prodigious number of their warriors deſtroyed. In this dreadful dilemma they were glad to accept of any terms the conquerors choſe to impoſe on them. The Checkeſaws, who, fortunately for them, had not completed their preparations, as ſoon as they heard of the ill ſucceſs that had attended their neighbours, the Creeks and the Cherokees, determined to remain quietly within their own confines. Thus, for the preſent, ended the deſigns of the Engliſh on the back ſettlements of America. The event was peculiarly fortunate for congreſs; for it made them formidable to the Indians, and attached ſeveral of the back ſettlers to their cauſe, convincing them that they had now nothing to hope from a continuance of their attachment to the government of Great Britain.

The congreſs, relieved from any apprehenſions of an invaſion on their frontier ſettlements, and the grand ſyſtem of confederation being now ratified, were enabled to concentrate their attention upon general Waſhington, whoſe army they laboured with uncommon activity and diligence to ſupply with the neceſſaries it wanted, and with new levies of men, in order that the enſuing campaign might be commenced with a proper degree of vigour.

CHAP. X.

Situation of Affairs in Canada—General Carleton ſends an Armament againſt Crown Point and Ticonderoga—Force oppoſed to this by the Americans.

CHAP. X. 1776.

THE Americans, though they were under the neceſſity of relinquiſhing their deſigns on Canada, ſtill poſſeſſed Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and were maſters of Lake Champlain. To diſpoſſeſs them of theſe poſts was an arduous and a difficult taſk, inaſmuch as the Britiſh had not a veſſel on Lake Champlain to oppoſe the American fleet. Difficult however as it was, general Carleton reſolved to uſe every effort to procure a naval force adequate to the importance of the object in view. Thirty veſſels were neceſſary to acquire a ſuperiority of force on the Lake. The largeſt were ſent from England; but it was found neceſſary to take them to pieces. It was alſo requiſite to tranſport over land, and drag up the rapid currents of St. Thereſe and St. John's, with thirty long boats, a number of flat boats of great burthen, a gondola, weighing thirty tons, and above four hundred batteaux.

General Carleton equips an armament againſt Crown Point and Ticonderoga.

In ſpite of the fatigue of the undertaking, and the complexity of difficulty that attended it, the taſk was completed in about three months. Diſpatch indeed was rendered abſolutely neceſſary; for the winter ſeaſon was approaching, and it was wiſhed that the object ſhould be attained before the ſeverities of the ſeaſon ſhould render any attempts of the kind impracticable. The difficulty of the ſcheme may be conceived from the following relation: The Engliſh had to paſs two inland ſeas, to ſubdue an unknown force on each, and to make themſelves maſters of Crown Point and Ticonderoga.

In addition to theſe impediments, the communication between Lakes George and Champlain would not admit the paſſage of thoſe veſſels of force, which, after being ſucceſsful on one lake, might be wanted on the other. Should, however, all theſe difficulties be overcome, then the army would ſtill have to march through intricate foreſts, deep moraſſes, ſwamps, and a country ſtill in a ſtate of nature, before they could arrive at Albany, the firſt poſt ſouthward. But the magnitude of the object rendered all theſe difficulties and dangers light: For general Carleton, in diſpoſſeſſing the enemy of Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and in ſecuring the poſſeſſion of Lakes George and Champlain, had not only in view the clearing the frontiers of Canada, but of opening a communication with the northern and middle colonies, which he conceived he could then invade at will. Beſides, by poſſeſſing Hudſon's River, he knew that he ſhould be able to co-operate with general Howe, and to afford him aſſiſtance in caſe of emergency. Added to theſe advantages, ſhould ſucceſs attend the preſent undertaking, the ſouthern would be ſeparated from the northern provinces. The latter would, of courſe, be under the neceſſity of ſuſtaining the attacks of two armies, or of yielding to ſuch terms as ſhould be impoſed upon them, leaving the ſouthern colonies to continue the war alone. Nor could general Waſhington then hold the poſſeſſion of the Jerſeys, unleſs he choſe to expoſe himſelf to the diſadvantageous predicament of encountering a ſuperior army in front, and the Canadian forces in his rear.

CHAP. X. 1776.

About the beginning of October the Engliſh fleet was ready to oppoſe the enemy on Lake Champlain. It conſiſted of the following veſſels: The Inflexible, mounting eighteen twelve-pounders; which veſſel had been re-conſtructed at St. John's in twenty-eight days after her keel had been laid down; one ſchooner, mounting fourteen, and another twelve, ſix-pounders; a flat-bottomed batteau, carrying ſix twenty-four, and the ſame number of twelve-pounders, beſides howitzers; and a gondola, with ſeven nine-pounders. Twenty ſmaller veſſels, called gun-boats, carried either braſs field-pieces, or howitzers. Some long-boats were furniſhed in the ſame manner. An equal number of large boats ſerved as tranſports for the troops, baggage, warlike ſtores, proviſions, and all the other neceſſaries for the army, that, under convoy of the ſhipping, was to be conveyed acroſs the lakes. This fleet was commanded by captain Pringle, an active and brave officer, who had under his command ſeven hundred ſeamen. The army embarked in the batteaux, which were ordered to keep in the rear as ſoon as they had entered Lake Champlain, in order that the fleet might reconnoitre the ſituation of the enemy.

The force oppoſed to the Britiſh armament by the Americans

The force which the Americans had to oppoſe to this armament was in every reſpect unequal to it. Their veſſels were neither ſo well conſtructed nor furniſhed with neceſſaries as thoſe of the Engliſh; beſides, they were inferior in point of number, the fleet amounting only to fifteen veſſels of different kinds, conſiſting of two ſchooners, one ſloop, one cutter, three gallies, and eight gondolas. Colonel Arnold, who had acquired ſuch fame before Quebec, was honoured with the command of it. On the eleventh of October the Britiſh fleet diſcovered that of the enemy, very advantageouſly poſted off the Iſland Valicour, with an intention of defending the paſſage between that iſland and the weſtern main. A ſchooner and ſome gun-boats, being conſiderably a-head of the reſt of the fleet, began the engagement, which was continued for ſome hours on both ſides with great intrepidity. Unfortunately the Inflexible, and the other ſhips of force, could not advance near enough to take a part in the engagement, on account of the unfavourableneſs of the wind: For this reaſon captain Pringle, having conſulted general Carleton, thought it adviſable to order thoſe that were engaged to ſheer off, and, for the preſent, diſcontinue the action. In this attack the largeſt of the enemy's ſhips was forced a-ſhore, and one of their gondolas ſunk. Night coming on, the enemy retired into Cumberland Bay, and captain Pringle, in order to prevent their retreat, formed the Britiſh fleet into a line as near the entrance of the bay as poſſible. defeated.

Arnold, who was fully ſenſible of the inſufficiency of his ſtrength, determined to take advantage of the darkneſs of the night, and retreat to Crown Point. This determination, notwithſtanding the proximity of the Britiſh fleet, he was enabled to execute in part. He retired out of the bay undiſcovered, and on the morning of the twelfth of October was out of ſight. The Britiſh fleet immediately followed him, and the wind proving favourable on the thirteenth, he was overtaken a few leagues from Crown Point. Unable to avoid an engagement, Arnold reſolved to conduct it with his wonted intrepidity and reſolution. About noon the engagement commenced on both ſides, and continued with great fury for two hours. Several of Arnold's fleet then left him, and retreated with great ſpeed to Ticonderoga. Arnold, however, refuſed to follow their puſillanimous example, and, with the remnant of his fleet, ſtill continued to reſiſt the attack of the Britiſh with unabated intrepidity. At length victory decided againſt him. His ſecond largeſt galley, called the Waſhington, commanded by brigadier-

1776.

gadier-general Waterby, after a deſperate reſiſtance, was at length forced to ſtrike her colours. Finding then, that all his efforts would be ineffectual, he reſolved to retreat. But even in this ſituation he diſplayed a magnanimity of courage that was aſtoniſhing. Though reduced to the neceſſity of bending under ſuperior power, he reſolved that neither his men nor his veſſels ſhould be taken. The Congreſs galley, which he commanded, and five other gondolas, were run a-ground by his orders, and as ſoon as the men were landed, burnt down to the water's edge. He remained himſelf on board his own ſhip till ſhe was ſet fire to in ſeveral places, in order that his flag might not be ſtruck by the Engliſh.

This victory on the Lakes was obtained without much loſs on the ſide of the Engliſh, two gun-boats only being loſt, and not more than fifty men killed and wounded. On the fifteenth of October the Britiſh fleet anchored off Crown Point, which the enemy immediately evacuated, retiring to their main body at Ticonderoga. General Carleton diſembarking the army at Crown Point, remained there till the third of November. As the winter was advancing faſt, he did not think it adviſable to attempt the reduction of Ticonderoga. His opinion, however, did not coincide with that of other officers. Ticonderoga is but fifteen miles from Crown Point. It was well known that the fortifications were in no condition to withſtand an attack; and indeed, general Gates, convinced of this fact, was prepared to evacuate it, as ſoon as any meaſure ſhould be adopted for the inveſtiture of it. With reſpect to the advanced ſtate of the ſeaſon, they thought that to be not a very ſtrong argument, becauſe eight days would have been fully ſufficient for the attainment of the deſired object. The reduction of it would certainly have forwarded the operations of the enſuing campaign, and would have increaſed the number of loyaliſts, a body of perſons from Albany, well affected to Great Britain, having prepared themſelves to join the commander in chief as ſoon as he ſhould arrive at Ticonderoga. General Carleton remained not long at Crown Point, but returned to St. John's, and placed the army in winter-quarters, Iſle aux Noix, being the frontier poſt, and the cantonments extending through different parts of the country.

CHAP. XI.

Inevitable Neceſſity of War in the general Opinion of the Britiſh Nation—Diſtreſs of the Weſt Indies—Capture of American Privateers—Conduct of France and Spain—Meeting of Parliament—Debates in both Houſes.

CHAP. XI. 1776. Inevitable neceſſity of war.

WAR, in the opinion of a great majority of the people of Great Britain, was now inevitable. There was, indeed, a kind of paſſion for it that pervaded the whole nation; nor could the depredations of the American cruizers, the capture of many richly-laden Weſt India veſſels, and the conſequent failure of ſeveral large houſes in the city, retard its operation, or arreſt its effect. Such a diſpoſition could not but be extremely agreeable to adminiſtration, becauſe it procured them a degree of ſtability that ſeemed to defy the attacks of an oppoſition ill connected, and proceeding on no regular or given line of conduct. In both houſes of parliament the force of government was fully adequate to every deſire that adminiſtration could entertain; nevertheleſs, a few days before the receſs, the upper houſe received an addition of ten new peers. In every preceding debate on the American war, thoſe who oppoſed it had always predicted that it would involve the Britiſh Weſt India iſlands in great calamity and diſtreſs. Such predictions were then treated as chimerical.

May 14, 1776.

Diſtreſs of the Britiſh Weſt India iſlands.

In July, accounts were received of a ſcarcity in the iſlands of the neceſſaries of life, which, on that account, had, within a ſhort period, riſen to four times their uſual price. Other wants began to multiply; but as they did not immediately relate to a ſcarcity of neceſſary ſuſtenance, they were felt leſs ſenſibly than otherwiſe they would have been. In addition to theſe diſtreſſes, the negroes in Jamaica had meditated an inſurrection, which, however, was happily cruſhed before it had attained any dangerous height. Our military ſtrength in Jamaica was but weak, on account of the drafts that had been made for the American ſervice. The naval force was on the point of being employed in convoying home a large fleet of merchantmen, which had completed their homeward-bound inveſtments. Their departure was to be the period at which the inſurrection was to commence. By ſome fortunate event the plan was diſcovered. The naval force, of courſe, was detained, and the merchantmen remained a month beyond the time fixed for their departure. After the mutinous ſpirit of the negroes had been ſufficiently quelled, the merchantmen were ſuffered to depart; but the delay produced the moſt ruinous conſequences. The Americans thereby gained time to equip their privateers, and bad weather ſeparating the fleet, many of our merchantmen, whoſe cargoes were extremely valuable, fell into their hands. The Britiſh nation, by theſe captures alone, during the year 1776, loſt property to the amount of above a million ſterling.

Conduct of France and Spain.

It was about the middle of this year that France and Spain began to manifeſt a hoſtile diſpoſition towards Great Britain. Their ports in Europe were open to the American privateers, and Engliſh prizes were ſold without any attempts to make ſuch ſales ſecret. Government remonſtrated againſt ſuch proceedings; but their remonſtrances were attended but with little effect: For though the open diſpoſal of prizes was checked, yet the practice ſtill continued in ſecret. In the French Weſt India iſlands, the countenance given to the Americans was much more avowed. French veſſels accepted American commiſſions, and carried on hoſtilities againſt the commerce of Great Britain, even without any American ſeamen on board. Theſe

doings

1776.

doings were not unknown to the adminiſtration of Great Britain; but it was judged neceſſary that, for a time, the aſſertion of the national dignity and character ſhould be ſuſpended.

In conſequence of theſe captures by the American cruizers and the French veſſels with American commiſſions, the price of inſurance was conſiderably increaſed; but that upon veſſels bound from the Weſt Indies amounted to the enormous ſum of twenty-three pounds per cent.

It was now apparent to all, that Great Britain would not have only one enemy to contend with. Spain and France were buſily employed in making warlike preparations; the object of which, it was reaſonably ſuppoſed, was to co-operate with America. Beſides, the hoſtile diſpoſition of each of the two powers was ſufficiently diſcernible from their treatment of the ally of Great Britain, Portugal. Theſe circumſtances were ſufficient to infuſe into the mind of adminiſtration a conſiderable degree of diſquiet and alarm: Nevertheleſs they prepared to meet the impending ſtorm with reſolution, in which, it has been ſaid, and generally believed, they were encouraged and confirmed from a very high quarter. Nor, indeed, is there any thing more natural than that the auguſt perſonage, now alluded to, conſcious of a juſt cauſe, breathing the courage of his royal anceſtry, and animated by the general vows of his people, ſhould be willing to call forth all the reſources, in order to maintain the glory, with the individuality, of the empire; reſources which, in ſpite of all our enemies, would have ultimately led to ſafety and triumph, if they had been as prudently employed as they were liberally opened. About the middle of October ſixteen additional ſhips were put into commiſſion, and ſeamen were invited to enter into the ſervice, by a bounty of five pounds per man. A proclamation was iſſued, commanding all Britiſh ſeamen, who were employed in any foreign ſervice, to return to England: A ſecond and a third were iſſued, laying an embargo on the exportation of proviſions from Great Britain and Ireland; and the fourth commanded the obſervance of a faſt..

Meeting of parliament.

On the thirty-firſt of October 1776, both houſes of parliament aſſembled, and the following is the ſubſtance of the ſpeech delivered to them from the throne: It began by aſſuring them, that it would have afforded his majeſty much ſatisfaction to have been able to inform them that the diſturbances in the revolted colonies were at an end, and that the people of America, recovering from their deluſion, had returned to their duty; but ſo mutinous and determined was the ſpirit of thoſe who led them, that they had openly abjured and renounced all connection and communication with the mother-country, and had rejected, with the utmoſt contempt, every concilitory propoſition that had been ſubmitted to them. After alluding to the late declaration of congreſs, in which they had erected the colonies into ſovereign and independent ſtates, it was contended that much miſchief would accrue, not only to the commerce of Great Britain, but to the general ſyſtem of Europe, if this rebellion and revolt were ſuffered to take root. Nevertheleſs it was aſſerted, that this benefit would reſult from the open declaration of the rebellious colonies—that their intentions being now clearly underſtood, would produce unanimity at home, becauſe every one muſt be convinced of the neceſſity of the meaſures propoſed to be adopted. The ſucceſs of the Britiſh arms in Canada, and on the ſide of New York, was adduced as a good reaſon for ſuppoſing that the moſt beneficial conſequences would ariſe from it. Another campaign, however, muſt be prepared for, and the ſupplies neceſſary for carrying it on, procured as ſoon as poſſible.

The conduct of Spain towards the Britiſh ally, Portugal, was next adverted to; and it was ſtated that, though a continuance of the general tranquillity in Europe was hoped, yet it was thought moſt adviſable viſeable to increaſe the defenſive reſources at home. The diſpoſition of other European powers was declared to be pacific. After expreſſing a conviction of the cheerfulneſs with which the neceſſary ſupplies would be granted, the ſpeech in concluſion aſſured both houſes that his majeſty had no other end in view, by his preſent ſyſtem of conduct, than to reſtore the revolted colonies to their former ſituation of proſperity and ſecurity under the dominion of Great Britain. The addreſſes in anſwer to this ſpeech were couched in the uſual form: Amendments, however, were propoſed in both houſes.

In the houſe of commons lord John Cavendiſh moved an amendment to the following effect: It included an enlarged view of the conduct of adminiſtration with reſpect to America, and expreſſed great regret at beholding the hearts of a large, and hitherto loyal, portion of his majeſty's ſubjects alienated from his government. This event, it was contended, could not have been produced without great miſconduct on the part of thoſe who poſſeſſed the direction of the affairs of government; the particulars of which miſconduct were ſtated, at great length, and with much animation, in the houſe of lords. A ſimilar amendment, propoſed by the marquis of Rockingham, was defended by ſimilar arguments. The miniſter however, as uſual, was ſupported by a large majority. In the houſe of commons the amendment propoſed by lord John Cavendiſh was rejected by two hundred and forty-two, and ſupported by only eighty-ſeven. The original addreſs was then put and carried. In the upper houſe the friends of the miniſter were equally numerous. The marquis of Rockingham's motion was negatived by ninety-one lords to twenty-ſix. The propoſed amendment, however, was entered in the Journals of the houſe, in form of a proteſt, and ſigned by fourteen peers. Yet was not the miniſter ſupported by a large majority in parliament only: The obſtinate and unvarying oppoſition which the Americans had ſhewn towards the mother-country, and the arguments that had been adduced by the adherents of adminiſtration, had, in a great manner, eſtranged the hearts of the people from their brethren in the colonies. Perhaps too, from national pride, which it is not my intention to condemn, they were induced to ſupport the war, from a wiſh that the mother-country might convince the world that ſhe poſſeſſed the means of ſubduing all who were hardy enough to oppoſe her.

CHAP. XII.

Proclamation iſſued by Lord and General Howe—Debates upon it—The American Laws propoſed to be reviſed by Lord John Cavendiſh—This Motion rejected—The Propriety of a partial Seceſſion conſidered—Seamen voted—Naval Affairs—Supplies for the Military and Naval Service—Receſs of Parliament.—1776.

CHAP. XII. 1776. SCARCELY had the addreſſes from both houſes been preſented to his majeſty, when the proclamation iſſued by lord Howe and his brother, ſubſequently to the capture of New York, was publiſhed in one of the morning papers. This was conceived to be extraordinary, becauſe, although two gazettes had been publiſhed the preceding day, no notice had been taken of ſuch a proclamation in either of them. On the day on which the proclamation appeared in the morning paper, Nov. 6. lord John Cavendiſh ſubmitted it to the conſideration of the houſe of commons, though he affected not to conſider it in any other light than as a forgery, and an impoſition on the people, which required exemplary puniſhment.

In reply to this ſpeech, the miniſter acknowledged that ſuch a proclamation had been made, and that the paper now produced contained an authentic copy of it. Lord John Cavendiſh, on receiving this information, immediately roſe with great warmth and indignation. He reprobated the conduct of adminiſtration, contending that they had groſsly inſulted the houſe by withholding ſuch an important piece of intelligence, and by ſuffering it to come to the knowledge of the public through the medium of a common paper. But this treatment was not different from that which the miniſter had thought proper to ſhew to parliament from the commencement of the American diſturbances; a treatment that, whilſt the ſhadow of a conſtitution remained, and miniſters continued to be reſponſible for their conduct, could not be defended on any grounds or by any arguments whatever. Adminiſtration, on the other hand, and their adherents, contended that the promiſe held out in the proclamation by the commiſſioners was not novel. It was only purſuing that mode of conduct which had been adopted by parliament at the commencement of the diſturbances, viz. the reſtoration of peace to America. With regard to the inſulting treatment with which adminiſtration had been charged in not publiſhing the proclamation in the gazette, it was ſaid, that it ſeemed not to be of ſufficient importance, becauſe it was neither a treaty, nor part of one; it only formed a preliminary, which might eventually lead to one. If, therefore, this preliminary were even important enough to be laid before parliament, miniſters were juſtified in not purſuing ſuch a meaſure by precedent. The negotiation between Mr. Pitt and M. De Buſſy was not laid before the houſe of commons during its pendency. The motion for a committee was oppoſed in the moſt ſtrenuous manner. It was contended that it would tend rather to impede than accelerate the negotiations of the commiſſioners, and to infuſe into the minds of the Americans improper jealouſies and apprehenſions. Beſides, it would be impolitic to ſeem too fond of conceding; for the Americans would then demand more than they might originally intend. Another, and moſt forcible, objection to the motion was, that it would be abſurd to conſider of the reviſal or repeal of laws, the authority of which was denied in the moſt unqualified manner. America had declared herſelf independent. The firſt point therefore to be ſettled, preliminary to any negotiation, was the queſtion of independence. As long as ſhe perſiſted in this independence, no treaty could be begun, and all conceſſions would be diſhonourable. If ſhe conſented to give it up, and to acknowledge the authority of the mother-country, then would be the proper ſeaſon to reviſe and repeal obnoxious laws, and to eſtabliſh regulations conſonant with the rights of thoſe who were to be bound by them. From the approaching campaign much was to be expected. The tyranny of the congreſs would operate in favour of the Britiſh cauſe, and the acknowledged ſuperiority of the Britiſh troops, both in number and in diſcipline, would produce conſequences favourable to the mother-country, and likely to put a ſpeedy termination to the war. After a very long and intereſting debate, the motion was put, and the houſe divided: Forty-ſeven ſupported the motion, and one hundred and nine voted againſt it.

Seceſſion of members of the houſe of commons.

The rejection of this motion produced an extraordinary effect. Several members of the minority withdrew themſelves whenever any queſtions relative to America were diſcuſſed. They did not wholly refrain from attending the houſe; but as ſoon as the private buſineſs of the day was diſpatched, they made their uſual obeiſance to the ſpeaker, and retired. Thus, for ſome time, all debates upon important ſubjects were avoided, and vaſt ſupplies were granted without a ſingle obſervation with reſpect to their tendency, or the purpoſes to which they were to be applied. The members who ſeceded adduced the following reaſons in juſtification of their conduct: As affairs were at preſent ſituated, all oppoſition to the propoſitions of government, with reſpect to American affairs, was not only fruitleſs, but contemptible, on account of the numbers that ſupported the miniſter on every queſtion. They were tired with oppoſing reaſon and argument to ſuperior power and numbers. This conduct, however, of the ſeceding members, did not receive the approbation of the oppoſition in general. Several contended that a partial ſeceſſion was inconſiſtent with the duties attached to the ſituation of a member of parliament. A collective ſeceſſion had been ſanctioned by a precedent in the reign of the firſt Charles, but it ought always to be general.

The diſunion occaſioned by this difference of opinion, added greatly to the ſtrength of adminiſtration, and contributed not a little to increaſe the number of thoſe who ſupported the continuance of the war. When the miniſter, in a committee of ſupply, propoſed that forty-five thouſand ſeamen ſhould be voted for the ſervice of the enſuing year, Mr. Luttrell, a member in oppoſition, ſeized the opportunity of reprobating, in very ſevere terms, the conduct of the peer who poſſeſſed the rank of firſt lord of the admiralty. He charged him with wilfully impoſing on the parliament and the nation by a fallacious account of the ſtate of the navy both with reſpect to the ſhips and the ſeamen. The miniſter, in reply to theſe obſervations, vindicated the conduct of the peer alluded to, and contended that it was improper to attack a perſon who, from his ſtation, could not defend himſelf in that houſe. He alſo alleged, that the introduction of the accuſation, without any previous notice, was diſorderly, and inconſiſtent with the rule of parliament.

Extraordinary ſupplies.

Mr. Luttrell, however, inſiſted that, as a member of parliament, he had a right to make ſuch obſervations on the conduct of miniſters as appeared to him to be well-founded. With reſpect to the want of a formal accuſation, he would remove all objections on that head when the houſe ſhould be reſumed. Accordingly he took the earlieſt opportunity of moving for ſeveral returns of the navy. Theſe, he contended, would eſtabliſh the charges he had adduced againſt the noble lord, and convince the houſe what was the real ſtate of the naval reſources of the country. Theſe returns, however, were refuſed by adminiſtration, and their refuſal was ſupported on the following grounds: It was contended that a diſcloſure of the naval ſtrength or weakneſs of the country would be attended with injurious conſequences, inaſmuch as, if Great Britain were ſuperior to other powers, they would be induced to be more circumſpect in their deſigns, and if ſhe were weaker than them, they would thereby be encouraged to take advantage of our defenceleſs ſituation.

The ſupplies for the navy, granted this year, amounted to three millions two hundred and five thouſand five hundred and five pounds; including the ordinary, at four hundred thouſand pounds; and the expences of building and repairing ſhips, at four hundred and ſixty-two thouſand five hundred pounds. In this account, however neither the ſum voted to Greenwich hoſpital, nor the million granted at the cloſe of the ſeſſion for the diſcharge of the navy debt, were included. The ſupplies for the military eſtabliſhment amounted to a ſum little leſs than the ſupplies for the navy—the amount was three millions. The extraordinaries, however, of the preceding year, amounting to one million two hundred thouſand pounds, with freſh contracts for German forces, expences of half-pay and Chelſea hoſpital, were not included in the groſs ſum. All the neceſſary public buſineſs being diſpatched on the thirteenth of December, both houſes adjourned to the twenty-firſt of January.

Adjournment of parliament.

CHAP. XIII.

Letters of Marque and Repriſal Bill—Bill for ſecuring Perſons charged with High-Treaſon—Debates upon it—Amendment propoſed by Mr. Dunning—Agreed to—The Bill carried through both Houſes—Extraordinary unprovided Expences of the War voted—Motion for an Addreſs to the Throne by the Earl of Chatham—Rejected—Prorogation of the Parliament.—1777.

CHAP. XIII.

1777. Letters of marque and repriſal bill.

AS ſoon as the parliament met after the receſs, a bill was paſſed, authoriſing any owners or captains of private merchant-ſhips to make prizes of all veſſels belonging to the thirteen American colonies.

Bill for ſecuring perſons charged with high-treaſon.

On the ſixth of February, the miniſter moved in the houſe of commons for leave to bring in a bill, to ſecure and detain perſons charged with, or ſuſpected of, the crime of high-treaſon, committed in America or on the high ſeas, or the crime of piracy. In ſupport of his motion he obſerved that, during the preſent diſturbances, priſoners had been made in the actual commiſſion of the crime of high-treaſon; others, ſuſpected of the ſame crime, could not be ſecured, on account of the want of ſufficient evidence. Formerly, in caſes of rebellion and revolt, and when an invaſion was apprehended, parliament granted this power to the crown; but in the preſent period, as neither rebellion at home, nor invaſion from abroad, were in danger of being experienced, he ſhould not requeſt that power in its full extent. The law now did not empower government officially to apprehend the moſt ſuſpected perſon, nor could the crown confine rebel priſoners or pirates in any other place than in the common gaols. To remedy theſe inconveniences, and to empower his majeſty to confine ſuch perſons in the ſame manner as other priſoners of war, until criminal proceedings could be inſtituted againſt them, were the objects propoſed to be attained by the preſent bill. Leave was given for the introduction of the bill: On the queſtion for the ſecond reading of it, it appeared that the enacting clauſe rendered all perſons taken in the act of high-treaſon, or ſuſpected of it, liable to be committed to priſon without bail or trial, during the continuance of the law. When the queſtion was put, a gentleman of great eminence in his profeſſion (Mr. Dunning)

Debate upon it.

animadverted ſeverely on the conduct of the miniſter, in attempting, when the houſe was thinly attended, to introduce and precipitate the paſſage of a bill, which was to undermine that bulwark of the conſtitution, the Habeas Corpus act. Time, he contended, ought to be given to the nation to conſider whether they would ſurrender the foundation and corner-ſtone of all the rights which they poſſeſſed. For theſe reaſons, and in order to prevent the ſecond reading of the bill, he moved that it ſhould be printed; in which the miniſter was under the neceſſity of acquieſcing. The introduction of this bill recalled ſeveral of thoſe members who had ſeceded from the houſe. In every ſtage through which the bill paſſed, it was violently oppoſed by the minority, who contended that no reaſon exiſted for inveſting the crown with ſo dangerous a power; that it would tend to widen the breach between the mother-country and the colonies, and cut off all hopes of a conciliation of the differences between them Beſides, it was contended, that the power might be extended to innocent perſons, and would thereby become an inſtrument of tyranny and oppreſſion. Several amendments were propoſed, all of which were

Amendment propoſed by Mr. Dunning.

rejected, except one on the third reading, propoſed by Mr. Dunning. The amendment was contained in the following clauſe: "Provided alſo, and be it hereby declared, that nothing herein

" contained is intended, or ſhall be conſtrued to extend to the caſe " of any other priſoner or priſoners, than ſuch as have been in ſome " one of the colonies before mentioned, or on the high ſeas, at the " time or times of the offence or offences wherewith he or they " ſhall be charged." The amendment, with ſome trifling alteration, was agreed to. The acceptance of this clauſe afforded great joy to the minority, who conſidered the bill as diveſted thereby of the moſt dangerous tendency. Nevertheleſs they ſtill continued to oppoſe the principle of the bill with undiminiſhed vigour and unwearied perſeverance. In this, however, they were unſucceſsful, and the bill was paſſed without a diviſion.

agreed to.

The bill carried through both houſes.

In the houſe of lords, no oppoſition was made to it, all the peers in the minority having abſented themſelves, except the earl of Abingdon.

Extraordinary unprovided expences of the war voted.

About the latter end of February, the ſeveral extraordinary unprovided expences of the war, to the amount of two millions one hundred and ſeventy thouſand pounds, were defrayed by the houſe of commons. No debates of any importance relative to the American war occurred in either houſe, till the end of May. An addreſs to the throne was then moved in the houſe of peers, by the venerable earl of Chatham. At this period his lordſhip laboured under many bodily infirmities. Nevertheleſs his intellectual vigour remained unimpaired, and, in his zeal to ſerve his country, the enfeebled ſtate of his body was forgotten. His lordſhip had in former periods repeatedly endeavoured to reconcile the differences between the colonies and the mother-country, and though his attempts were not attended with the deſired effect, yet he reſolved to make one effort more.

Motion for an addreſs to the throne by the earl of Chatham.

The lords being accordingly ſummoned on the thirtieth of May, his lordſhip moved that an addreſs ſhould be preſented to his majeſty, repreſenting that the houſe of lords were ſenſible of the ruin that threatened the country from a continuation of the unnatural war with the Britiſh colonies in America, and adviſing that the moſt ſpeedy and effectual meaſures ſhould be taken for putting a period to ſuch fatal hoſtilities, upon the only juſt and ſolid foundation, namely, the removal of the accumulated grievances; with an aſſurance, that the houſe would enter upon that great and neceſſary work with cheerfulneſs and diſpatch, in order to open to his majeſty the only means of regaining the affections of the Britiſh colonies, and of ſecuring to Great Britain the commercial advantages of thoſe valuable poſſeſſions; fully perſuaded that to heal and to redreſs would be more congenial with the goodneſs and magnanimity of his majeſty, and more prevalent over the hearts of generous and free-born ſubjects, than the rigours of chaſtiſement, and the horrors of civil war, which hitherto had ſerved only to ſharpen reſentment and conſolidate union, and, if continued, muſt finally end in diſſolving all ties between Great Britain and her colonies.

Such was the purport of the addreſs. In commenting on the neceſſity of an aſſent being given to it, his lordſhip declared, that under the words *accumulated grievances*, he meant to convey every tranſaction, with reſpect to America, ſince 1763, and the redreſs of all their grievances, including more particularly the right of diſpoſing of their own money. This ſpirit of conduct would pave the way for treaty and negotiation; it would teſtify the amicable temperament of the parliament; and thus the chief obſtacle being removed, all other matters would follow as things of courſe. The preſſing and immediate neceſſity of acquieſcing in the addreſs he inſiſted on, from the danger to which Great Britain was expoſed from France.—A few weeks, and the fate of the country, as a nation, might be decided by a treaty between the houſe of Bourbon and the Americans. His lordſhip proceeded to ſtate the immenſe advantages that the mother-country would loſe from the commerce of the colonies being turned into another channel, and ſuffered to flow into the hands of the natural enemies of Great Britain. Trade, he ſaid, was rapidly declining, inaſmuch as it was now carried on in French and other bottoms; the conqueſt of America was impracticable; and if it were not, it would be attended with the moſt ruinous conſequences. To uſe the words of this great man, "America," he declared, "was contending with Great "Britain, under the maſked battery of France, which would open "upon this country, as ſoon as ſhe perceived that we were ſufficiently "weakened for her purpoſe, and ſhe found herſelf ſufficiently "prepared for war."

In reply to his lordſhip's obſervations, and to thoſe who ſupported him, adminiſtration oppoſed the addreſs on the old grounds that independence was the primary object of the Americans, that their preſent conduct was but the effect of the premeditation of ſeveral years, and that all conceſſions on the part of Great Britain would be equally ridiculous and impolitic. The danger held out from France was again denied, and it was contended that the aſſiſtance afforded the Americans in that quarter, originated, not in the government, but in private individuals, and in that ſpirit of enterpriſe for which that nation had always been remarkable. After an animated debate, the queſtion was put, when there appeared, on a diviſion—for the propoſed addreſs, twenty-eight —againſt it, ninety-nine.

rejected.

The money bills *, a vote of credit, and the other public buſineſs being diſpatched, his majeſty thought proper to prorogue both houſes of parliament on the ſixth of June. In his ſpeech from the throne, he declared his entire approbation of the meaſures that had

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* The ſpeech of the ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, ſir Fletcher Norton, afterwards lord Grantley, to his majeſty, on the ſeventh of May 1777, in the houſe of peers, on preſenting a bill for the better ſupport of his majeſty's houſehold, which made a great noiſe at that

had been adopted during the continuance of the ſeſſion; teſtified his thankfulneſs for the liberality and cheerfulneſs with which the extraordinary ſupplies for the ſervice of the current year had been

that time, and was a ſubject of various reflection, together with a conſequent reſolution and vote of the houſe of commons, we here lay before our readers.

Moſt Gracious Sovereign,

THE bill, which it is now my duty to preſent to your majeſty, is intituled, "An act for "the better ſupport of his majeſty's houſehold, and of the honour and dignity of the crown "of Great Britain:" To which your commons humbly beg your royal aſſent.

By this bill, ſir, and the reſpectful circumſtances which preceded and accompanied it, your commons have given the fulleſt and cleareſt proof of their zeal and affection for your majeſty. For in a time of public diſtreſs, full of difficulty and danger, their conſtituents labouring under burthens almoſt too heavy to be borne, your faithful commons poſtponed all other buſineſs; and with as much diſpatch as the nature of their proceedings would admit, have not only granted to your majeſty a large preſent ſupply, but alſo a very great additional revenue;—great, beyond example; great, beyond your majeſty's higheſt expence.

Butt all this, ſir, they have done in a well-grounded confidence, that you will apply wiſely what they have granted liberally; and feeling, what every good ſubject muſt feel with the greateſt ſatisfaction, that, under the direction of your majeſty's wiſdom, the affluence and grandeur of the ſovereign will reflect dignity and honour upon his people.

[Copied from the Votes of the Houſe of Commons, 7th May 1777.]

Ordered, Nem. Con.

That Mr. Speaker be deſired to print the ſpeech by him made to his majeſty in the houſe of peers, this day, upon his preſenting to his majeſty the bill for the better ſupport of his majeſty's houſehold, and of the honour and dignity of the crown of Great Britain, which then received the royal aſſent.

9th May 1777. Some alluſions having been made, in the debate on the laſt queſtion, to the ſpeech of Mr. Speaker, delivered at the bar of the houſe of peers, on Wedneſday laſt, Mr. Speaker, as ſoon as the ſaid queſtion was determined, called the attention of the houſe to this ſubject, and deſired that a copy of the ſpeech then made by him, might be read at the table. And the ſame being read accordingly, Reſolved, That the ſpeaker of this houſe, in his ſpeech to his majeſty at the bar of the houſe of peers on Wedneſday laſt, and which was deſired *nemine contradicente*, by this houſe to be printed, did expreſs, with juſt and proper energy, the zeal of this houſe, for the ſupport of the honour and dignity of the crown, in circumſtances of great public charge.

Ordered,

That the thanks of this houſe be returned to Mr. Speaker, for his ſaid ſpeech to his majeſty.

voted; and finally expreſſed his hope that, by a well-concerted and vigorous exertion of the great force entruſted to his hands, the operations of the preſent campaign would effectually tend to the ſuppreſſion of the rebellion in America, and to the re-eſtabliſhment of that conſtitutional obedience which all the ſubjects of a free ſtate owed to the authority of the law. The parliament was prorogued to the twenty-firſt of July.

Prorogation of parliament.

CHAP. XIV.

Opening of the Campaign—Expedition to Peek's Hill—To Danbury—Veſſels and Proviſions deſtroyed at Saggy Harbour—The Commander in Chief takes the Field—Endeavours to bring Waſhington to an Action—The Britiſh Troops relinquiſh the Jerſeys—General Preſcot carried off—Commander in Chief proceeds to Cheſapeak Bay—Lands at the Head of the Elk—Proclamation iſſued—General Waſhington moves to the North Side of the Brandywine River, in order to defend Philadelphia—Action at the Brandywine—General Wayne defeated—Royal Army paſſes the Schuylkill—Lord Cornwallis takes poſſeſſion of Philadelphia.

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IT has been already ſhewn what hardſhips the Britiſh army endured at Brunſwick and Amboy during the winter, and till the commencement of the ſpring. The weather was particularly ſevere; the duty unremitting and hard; the enemy watchful; and proviſions and forage were not obtained without repeated ſkirmiſhes. Neverthelеſs the ſoldiers endured theſe hardſhips with a fortitude and a perſeverance that acquired them infinite honour.

At the opening of the ſeaſon a body of provincial troops, amounting to ſeveral thouſand men, was embodied under the direction of the commander in chief. Theſe men were diſciplined by thoſe who had been under the neceſſity of relinquiſhing their poſſeſſions, and of flying from their habitations, on account of their attachment to the Britiſh cauſe. Theſe troops were allowed the ſame pay as the regulars, with a further advantage of receiving an allotment of lands at the concluſion of the diſturbances. Such a large body of ſtrength drawn from the heart of the country with which the Britiſh were waging war, was a moſt fortunate circumſtance. It decreaſed the reſources of the country, and it enabled the veteran troops to adopt more active operations than they would otherwiſe have been enabled to undertake. Theſe provincial forces, it is true, were inexperienced, and unacquainted with military diſcipline, but they were extremely well fitted for garriſon ſervice, and for the defence of a town. Accordingly they were immediately ſent to New York, from which the regulars were drafted in order to join the grand army. Governor Tryon, who had been very active in raiſing and diſciplining theſe new forces, was raiſed to the rank of major-general of the provincials, by which he was enabled, on any emergency, to unite the divided bodies of theſe troops, and to condenſe them into one body *.

Opening of the campaign.

The natural ſtrength of the tract which the Americans poſſeſſed, and which has been before deſcribed, and its fertility in reſources, had induced them, notwithſtanding the ſeverities of the winter, to employ themſelves in adding as much as poſſible to this natural ſtrength, by erecting forts and building mills and magazines. Of this tract of land, the moſt mountainous, and of courſe the moſt advantageous, was a place which bore the appellation of the Manor

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* About this time the royaliſts in the counties of Somerſet and Worceſter, in the province of Maryland, became ſo formidable that an inſurrection was dreaded: And it was feared that the inſurgents would, in ſuch a caſe, be joined by a number of diſaffected perſons in the county of Suſſex in the Delaware ſtate. Congreſs, to prevent this evil, recommended the apprehenſion and removal of all perſons of influence, or of deſperate characters, within the counties of Suſſex, Worceſter, and Somerſet, who manifeſted a diſaffection to the American cauſe, to ſome remote place within their reſpective ſtates, there to be ſecured. From appearances, congreſs had alſo reaſon to believe that the loyaliſts in the New England governments and New York ſtate had likewiſe concerted an inſurrection. See Gordon's Hiſtory of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 461, 462. By the ſame authority we are informed that general Gates wrote to general Fellows for a ſtrong military force, for the prevention of plots and inſurrection in the provinces of New England and New York.

of Courland. This was in a manner converted into a citadel, and large quantities of proviſions, forage, and ſtores of every kind, were depoſited in it. About fifty miles from New York, up the North River, was a place called Peek's Hill, which ſerved as a port to Courland Manor, and by which ſtores and proviſions were received and conveyed either to the army or to the numerous erections ſituated in the more interior parts.

Convinced of the importance of this place, and the diſtreſs to which the Americans would be driven if they ſhould be deprived of it, the commander in chief determined to open the campaign by an attack upon it. An attempt upon the Manor of Courland was deemed unadviſable, on account of its great natural and acquired ſtrength, and the conſequent diſadvantage of a battle in ſuch a place. Beſides, even if ſuch an attempt had not been judged improper, it would have been abſolutely neceſſary, preliminary to it, to have ſecured the poſſeſſion of Peek's Hill. In purſuance of this reſolution, a detachment of five hundred men, under the command of colonel Bird of the fifteenth regiment, was ordered to proceed from New York about the latter end of March, on this ſervice. This detachment embarked on board two tranſports, which conveyed them to the place of their deſtination the day after they left New York. On their approach a body of between ſeven and eight hundred men drew up at a diſtance, under the command of a colonel Macdougal, with a ſeeming determination of oppoſing the Britiſh armament. On the nearer advancement, however, of colonel Bird, they thought proper to retire from Peek's Hill, and being unable to remove the ſtores and proviſions it contained, ſet fire to the barracks and ſtore-houſes. Unable, on this account, to bring off the different articles that were contained in the magazine, the Britiſh thought proper to complete the conflagration; after which they returned to New York.

Expedition to Peek's Hill,

The conſequences that had reſulted from the ſucceſs of this expedition were not ſo important as had been expected. The commander in chief had received falſe intelligence of the ſituation of Peek's Hill, which did not contain that quantity of ſtores and proviſions he had been led to expect. Nevertheleſs it was abſolutely neceſſary that the ſtrength of the enemy ſhould be impaired and weakened as much as poſſible, by cutting off their reſources, and curtailing the means by which they were enabled to convey ſupplies to the troops ſtationed in different parts of the Manor of Courland.

and to Danbury.

The commander in chief having received intelligence of a large quantity of ſtores having been depoſited on the borders of Connecticut, in the town of Danbury, and other parts on the confines of Courland Manor, reſolved to undertake another expedition againſt thoſe parts. Two thouſand men, drafted from different regiments, were employed in this ſervice, which was entruſted to the command of major-general Tryon, who had accepted of the rank of major-general of provincials, and who panted for a military command. Sir William Howe very prudently appointed general Agnew, and ſir William Erſkine, to accompany governor Tryon, in his new character of general on this ſervice. On the twenty-fifth of April this detachment embarked from New York in tranſports, under the convoy of two frigates. They proceeded up the Eaſt River, as far as Camp's Point, where they landed. At ten o'clock at night they began their march to Danbury, where, about eight o'clock the next day, they arrived. The enemy, entertaining no apprehenſion of the intentions of the Engliſh, and unprepared to reſiſt them, retired on their approach, and ſuffered them to enter the town without oppoſition. Convinced of the impoſſibility of carrying off the ſtores that were contained in the town, and indeed having brought with them no carriages neceſſary for this purpoſe, the Engliſh were under the neceſſity of ſetting

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ting fire to the place *. The conflagration was not completed till the next morning. The detachment immediately ſet out on their return to the tranſports. The enemy, however, during the time occupied in the burning of Danbury, had aſſembled from all quarters, and poſted themſelves, under the command of general Arnold, at a town called Ridgefield, through which it was neceſſary for the Engliſh to paſs. In order to render their ſituation more ſecure, Arnold had thrown up intrenchments.

The Britiſh troops did not expect to meet with any reſiſtance; nevertheleſs, on their arrival at Ridgefield, they attacked the American intrenchments with great ſpirit, and carried them in a ſhort ſpace of time. The troops were by this time extremely fatigued from want of reſt and their late hard ſervice. As the day was on the wane, they lay on their arms till morning, having firſt taken the precaution to form themſelves into an oblong ſquare. As ſoon as they began their march at day-break, the enemy, who, during the night, had received a conſiderable increaſe of ſtrength, aſſailed them from all quarters; and from the houſes and ſtone walls, with which that country abounds, did conſiderable execution on the ſhipping as the Britiſh retreated. The route of the Britiſh troops lay over a bridge, of which the enemy took poſſeſſion, as well as ſome ſtrong ground that commanded the paſs beyond the bridge. They were in poſſeſſion of ſome field-artillery, which had been brought by general Wooſter, and the front they preſented to the Engliſh was extremely formidable. Fortunately, however, the guide whom the Engliſh had engaged conducted them to a part of the river, three

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* The Britiſh deſtroyed at Banbury 1600 barrels of pork and beef, 600 barrels of flour, upwards of 2000 barrels of wheat, rye, and Indian corn, a very conſiderable quantity of military clothing, and 2000 tents; a loſs which, from their ſcarcity, was ſeverely felt by the Americans. The Britiſh, in their return, deſtroyed about 70 barrels of flour, and 112 hogſheads of rum.

miles above the bridge, which they forded, and which the enemy had neglected to ſecure, having deemed the paſſage of it impracticable. This manœuvre ſomewhat diſconcerted them; nevertheleſs they continued their ſkirmiſhes and attacks on the Britiſh troops till they had arrived within half a mile of the ſhipping. Two diſtinct bodies of the enemy now appeared, making a ſhew of attacking the detachment, which by this time was almoſt exhauſted with fatigue. The men had had no reſt for three days and nights, and ſeveral of them dropped on the road with fatigue. Diſpirited however and exhauſted as they were, brigadier-general Erſkine putting himſelf at the head of four hundred of the moſt able of the detachment, attacked and broke the two columns, and put them to flight. So great was the panic among them, occaſioned by this ſpirited attack, that they did not attempt any further annoyance on the troops, though they might have done them conſiderable damage on account of the numerous rocks that ſkirt the ſhore. The Engliſh, embarking in the tranſports, returned to New York. It may be reaſonably doubted, whether the loſs which the Britiſh ſuſtained in this expedition, did not more than counterbalance the advantage derived from the complete attainment of their object.

In this expedition near two hundred men, including ten officers, were killed and wounded on the part of the Britiſh. The loſs of the Americans was much greater, and general Wooſter, with ſome field-officers, was numbered amongſt the ſlain.

The enemy ſeized every opportunity of annoying the Engliſh by ſkirmiſhes, and the thirty-third regiment, and a battalion of the ſeventy-firſt Highland regiment, who were poſted at Bonham Town, between Amboy and Brunſwick, loſt a great many men, the enemy conſtantly attacking their pickets.

On the twelfth of April lord Cornwallis, with a conſiderable detachment, effected a ſurpriſe upon the enemy's advanced poſts at

Bondwick,

Bondwick, ſeven miles from Brunſwick, where the American general Clinton was ſtationed with about twelve hundred men. The ſurpriſe would have been more complete had not ſome chaſſeurs, who were in the van, given the alarm too ſoon, by firing on the centinels; nevertheleſs the enemy were routed, and retired from the town, leaving ſome field artillery behind them, and about one hundred priſoners. On the nineteenth of April, an attempt was made by general Vaughan, with the garriſon at Amboy, to cut off the enemy's advanced pickets at Woodbridge. His intentions, however, were prevented, on account of the Americans having received intimation of his deſigns.

On the eighth of May, an attempt was made on the poſt of Piſcataway, by the American general Stevens, who had two thouſand men under his command. The forty-ſecond regiment, which was cantoned there, ſuſtained the attack with great reſolution, and forced the enemy to retreat, after a furious engagement, with conſiderable loſs.

Veſſels and proviſions deſtroyed at Saggy Harbour.

About the middle of this month, the Americans having received intelligence that a large quantity of proviſions and forage were depoſited in Long Iſland, at a place called Saggy Harbour, reſolved to attempt the capture of them. In this deſign they were encouraged by the diſtance of the place from New York, and the weakneſs of it, being defended only by an armed ſchooner of twelve guns. Nevertheleſs ſome danger attended the execution of the ſcheme, on account of the neceſſity of croſſing the Sound, which was full of Britiſh cruizers. This expedition was entruſted to colonel Meigs, an active officer, who had been trained under Arnold, and had been taken priſoner in the attempt to ſtorm the city of Quebec. The colonel, with his detachment, traverſed the Sound in whale-boats, landed on the north branch of the iſland, and after carrying the boats over an arm of land, embarked again, and landed on the ſouth branch of the iſland, within four miles of Saggy Harbour. At this place they arrived before break of day, and immediately commenced the attack. The place was vigorouſly defended by the crews of the merchant-veſſels and the ſchooner, which kept up a very heavy fire upon them; nevertheleſs they ſucceeded in their intentions, having burnt a dozen brigs and ſloops that lay at the wharf, and deſtroyed every article of proviſion and ſtores that was depoſited on the ſhore. In this attack ninety of the Engliſh were made priſoners, viz. the officer who commanded the harbour, and his men; the commiſſaries, and the crews of the veſſels which they had burnt.

There is a circumſtance in this expedition, which, if it be true, is curious. The Americans relate, that colonel Meigs, with his detachment, returned to Guildford in Connecticut, within twenty-five hours after his departure. In this ſpace of time, he had paſſed and repaſſed the Sound, and traverſed a ſpace not leſs than ninety miles.

About the latter end of May, congreſs were enabled to ſend ſupplies of men from the different provinces to general Waſhington, who, on receiving this large reinforcement, relinquiſhed his encampment at Morris Town, and removed to a ſtrong place, called Middle Brook. Here it was not thought adviſable to attack him, for his camp extended along ſeveral hills, and was ſtrongly fortified by intrenchments and artillery. In the front the approach was difficult, on account of the natural ſtrength of the ground. Every movement of the Britiſh on the Brunſwick hills was eaſily diſcernible; as alſo any operation that might be carried on in the intermediate ſpace between Brunſwick and Amboy. In his rear, general Waſhington had a plentiful country, from which he drew vaſt ſupplies; and he was enabled, if the ſituation of affairs ſhould render ſuch a ſtep neceſſary, to ſecure a ſafe retreat over the Hudſon and the Delaware rivers.

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1777.
The Britiſh commander in chief takes the field.

The tents and other neceſſaries, together with a freſh ſupply of troops, being at length arrived from England, in the beginning of June the commander in chief left New York, and croſſed over to the Jerſeys, with an intention of opening the campaign immediately. The Britiſh troops were, as uſual, greatly ſuperior in point of number to the Americans; and perhaps it may not here be deemed improper to ſtate the number of the troops on each ſide, from the beginning of 1776, to the commencement of the campaign in the following year.

British and Rebel Force in 1776.

Dates.		Britiſh.	Rebel troops.
Auguſt	——	24,000	16,000
November	——	26,900	4,500
December	——	27,700	3,300
		In 1777.	
March	——	27,000	4,500
June	——	30,000	8,000

Endeavours to bring Waſhington to an action.

Sir William Howe was thoroughly ſenſible of the impracticability of making an attack on general Waſhington in his preſent ſituation. He therefore made uſe of every poſſible effort to induce him to quit his poſition, and to hazard an engagement. The American general, however, eaſily penetrated into the deſigns of the commander in chief, and eluded them by his cool, collected, and prudent conduct. Finding that all his endeavours hitherto to provoke him to battle were unſucceſsful, general Howe reſolved to adopt an expedient, which in part ſucceeded. On the nineteenth of June he ſuddenly retreated from his ſituation in front of the enemy, with marks of ſeeming precipitation. He ordered the whole army to relinquiſh Brunſwick, and retire to Amboy. This manœuvre deceived the Americans, who, in ſeveral large bodies, under the command of generals Maxwell and Conway, and lord Sterling, purſued them. The commander in chief ſuffered himſelf to be purſued to ſome diſtance. He threw a bridge over the channel that ſeparates Staten Iſland from the continent, over which he paſſed his heavy baggage, and a ſmall number of men. General Waſhington, conceiving this retreat to be real, immediately relinquiſhed his encampment on the hills, and removed to a place called Quibble Town, in order to be able to co-operate with that part of his army which had been detached in purſuit of the Britiſh. As ſoon as the Britiſh commander in chief had ſucceeded in drawing the American general from his faſtneſſes, he marched the Engliſh army back by different routes, in order to bring general Waſhington to an engagement, to cut off his advanced parties, and, if both thoſe ſchemes ſhould fail, to ſecure ſome paſſes in the mountains, which would reduce the Americans to the neceſſity of relinquiſhing their former encampment on the hills. For this laſt purpoſe, lord Cornwallis was detached with a conſiderable body of troops. On the twenty-ſixth of June, his lordſhip began his march, and about ſeven o'clock in the morning, fell in with an advanced body of the enemy, amounting in number to about three thouſand, under the command of lord Sterling and general Maxwell; they were ſtrongly ſituated and well provided with artillery. The ardour, however, of the Britiſh troops was irreſiſtible—after a furious attack, the enemy gave way on all ſides, and retreated with great precipitation. They were purſued as far as Weſtfield, when, on account of the intenſe heat of the day, and the woods, his lordſhip thought proper to diſcontinue it. In this action, the Americans loſt two hundred men, killed and wounded, beſides three pieces of braſs cannon. Convinced of his error, in removing to Quibble Town, general Waſhington immediately regained

gained his ſtation on the hills, and at the ſame time ſecured thoſe paſſes, of which it was in the contemplation of lord Cornwallis to have poſſeſſed himſelf.

The Britiſh troops relinquiſh the Jerſeys.

Sir William Howe, being now ſenſible that every ſcheme of bringing the Americans to an engagement would be unattended with ſucceſs, reſolved to retire from the Jerſeys. Accordingly, on the twenty-eighth of June, he returned with the army to Amboy, and on the ſucceeding day croſſed over to Staten Iſland. A ſhort ceſſation of courſe occurred on each ſide.

General Preſcot carried off.

During the continuance of this, a ſpirited determination was made and executed by an American colonel of the name of Barton; it was to carry off the commander of Rhode Iſland (general Preſcot), and in conſequence to procure the enlargement of general Lee, by exchanging him for general Preſcot. The Britiſh general's head-quarters were on the weſt ſide of the iſland, near the Narraganſet Bay, about a quarter of a mile from the ſhore. He was guarded by only one centinel at a time, and his quarters were above a mile from any body of troops.—No patroles were poſted on the ſhore, and the general depended ſolely on a guard-ſhip that lay in the bay, oppoſite to his quarters. Colonel Barton being acquainted with theſe circumſtances, ſet out from Providence, with ſome officers and ſoldiers, in two boats, keeping near the iſland of Providence, till he came to the ſouth end, which was not more than two miles and a half from the general's quarters. Here he remained till dark, when he proceeded acroſs the bay unperceived, and landed about midnight. The centinel was ſurpriſed and properly ſecured—two other ſoldiers ran away; the general was taken out of bed, and, without being ſuffered even to put on his clothes, was hurried on board one of the boats. The boat paſſed under the ſtern of the Britiſh guard-ſhip without being perceived, and conveyed the general in ſafety to Providence. The general was much and deſervedly blamed for his imprudence, in truſting himſelf ſo far from the troops under his command, and for not adopting proper means to ſecure his ſafety. The commander in chief had hitherto ſteadily refuſed to relieve general Lee on any conditions whatever; nevertheleſs, the capture of general Preſcot obliged him to relinquiſh his reſolution; and general Lee was, in a ſhort period, reſtored to the American cauſe.

Until the beginning of June, the numbers of general Waſhington's army did not exceed eight thouſand men, militia included; a circumſtance which naturally pointed to the expediency of an early campaign; but the Britiſh commander conceiving it impoſſible to make any conſiderable movements till the green forage was on the ground *, did not take the field with the main army till the twelfth of June, when he aſſembled the troops at Brunſwick. General Waſhington was encamped on a hill above Quibble Town, about nine miles from that place, on the north ſide of the Rariton, with a force under ſix thouſand, and theſe undiſciplined and badly appointed; which, with a corps under general Sullivan of two thouſand men at Prince Town, compoſed his whole force. His camp was not inacceſſible, either through nature or art; it was ſtrong, and capable of defence in front, being guarded by the Rariton; and the hill in that quarter was ſteep and difficult of acceſs; but in his rear towards the mountains, and on his right towards the Delaware, it was by no means impracticable. There were large and good roads around it, leading from Brunſwick on either ſide of the river. In this ſtate Waſhington remained, as if he had been perfectly acquainted with the intended movements of the Britiſh army. The Britiſh commander marched his army in two columns, to Middle

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* Yet the country was full of grain, hay, and dry forage, much to be preferred to green, which would rather ſcour and weaken his horſes, than add to their ſtrength. This kind of forage he had, or might have had in his magazines, or might, as in the laſt campaign, have procured in his march through the country.

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Buſh and Hillſborough, two villages lying in a low level country, completely overlooked by the Americans, and on the ſouth ſide of the Rariton, keeping that river, which was not at that time fordable, between his army and the enemy. Proviſions for a few days only were taken from Brunſwick; the pontoons and flat-bottomed boats were left at that place, and the fleet lay ready at Staten Iſland to receive the army. General Waſhington, probably judging from the circumſtances that ſir William Howe did not mean to croſs the Delaware, remained in his camp, contenting himſelf with frequently haraſſing the Britiſh by his advanced parties.

General Sullivan, on the approach of the troops towards Prince Town, fled in a panic towards the Delaware. He had begun to embark his men, but was ſtopped by an order from general Waſhington, and took poſt at Flemingtown. In theſe poſitions the two armies remained from the fourteenth to the nineteenth of June; when the Britiſh general returned to Brunſwick, and on the twenty-ſecond to Amboy. In his march to both theſe places, his army was inſulted and haraſſed by ſmall parties of the rebels. On the thirtieth the troops croſſed Staten Iſland, in order to embark for the Cheſapeak. Thus the Britiſh general retreated before an enemy greatly inferior in force; and, after obtaining great advantages, altered the plan of operation which he himſelf had propoſed, and the Britiſh miniſter for war had approved *. Why (it was aſked) did he make ſuch expenſive preparations for croſſing the Delaware, without making uſe of them? Why did he paſs on the ſouth ſide of the Rariton, and take poſitions in which he could neither aſſail his enemy nor the enemy him, if diſpoſed to do ſo? Why did he not march round either on the north or ſouth to the rear of that enemy, where he might have been aſſaulted without any other hazard than

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[*] In a letter to lord George Germaine, dated the twentieth of January 1777, he declared his intention of penetrating with the main body of the army into Penſylvania by the way of Jerſey.

ſuch as muſt, in the common courſe of war, be unavoidably incurred? If the enemy was, in his judgment, ſo ſtrongly poſted as to render an attack on his camp a meaſure too bold and deſperate, why did he not intercept his convoys, cut off his ſupplies of proviſions, and reduce him under his power by famine; or croſs the Delaware, and deſtroy his poſts and magazines? It could not be ſuppoſed that general Waſhington would ſuffer the Britiſh army to paſs the Delaware, and ſeize his magazines and other places of ſtrength, without a ſtruggle. Had that been attempted, he muſt have quitted his camp and fought the Britiſh army, or have loſt his magazines, and the capital and moſt important city in North America; a ſacrifice which, as was demonſtrated by his ſubſequent conduct, he would never make without meaſuring arms.

British commander in chief proceeds to Cheſapeak Bay.

Notwithſtanding theſe and many other conſiderations that, in the general opinion, ſhould have moved our force in another direction, the Britiſh troops, conſiſting of thirty-ſix Heſſian and Britiſh battalions, including light-infantry and grenadiers, a corps called the queen's rangers, and a regiment of light horſe, on the fifth of July embarked in tranſports, where both foot and cavalry remained pent up, in the hotteſt ſeaſon of the year, in the holds of the veſſels, until the twenty-third, when they ſailed from Sandy Hook; but meeting with contrary winds, did not arrive at the Capes of the Delaware till the thirtieth. At New York were left ſeventeen battalions, the new provincial corps, and a regiment of light-horſe, under the command of general Clinton, and ſeveral battalions were ſtationed on Rhode Iſland. There were many who blamed the commander in chief, and with apparent reaſon, for not proceeding up the North River to Albany, inſtead of going to Philadelphia, in order to have effected a junction with general Burgoyne, and it was the general opinion that, had he adopted ſuch a meaſure, he would not only have prevented the fatal conſequences

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that enſued, but would have effected the reduction of America. Beſides, the delays incident to any expedition to the ſouthward at a ſeaſon of the year when the ſoutherly winds uſually blow nineteen out of twenty days, might have proved exceedingly injurious to the men ſo cloſely ſtowed in the tranſports, and could not but be ruinous to the horſes. The commander in chief at firſt intended to have gone up the Delaware, but having received intelligence that the enemy had rendered the navigation of that river difficult, he gave up his original intention, and proceeded to Cheſapeak Bay. The winds proved ſo contrary, as every one acquainted with the climate had predicted, that the fleet did not enter the Cheſapeak till the middle of Auguſt. As ſoon as they arrived in the Bay they proceeded up the Elk, the head of which river ſir William Howe gained in ſafety on the twenty-fourth of Auguſt.

Lands at the head of the Elk.

Proclamation iſſued.

As ſoon as the army was landed, the commander in chief publiſhed a proclamation, in which he offered pardon and protection to all who would ſurrender themſelves to the Britiſh troops; and at the ſame time he aſſured the inhabitants that the ſtricteſt order and diſcipline ſhould be preſerved by the troops in marching through the country. On the twenty-eighth of Auguſt the army moved forwards to a village at the head of the Elk, where the head-quarters were fixed. On the third of September a farther progreſs was made by a part of the army, which moved forwards about five miles; diſperſing the advanced guards of the enemy, and taking poſt on Iron Hill, a place that commanded a view of the Delaware. Generals Grant and Knyphauſen having joined the commander in chief with the troops under their command on the eighth of September, the whole army moved onwards in two columns on the route to Philadelphia. After they had proceeded about thirteen miles they halted, on receiving intelligence that the enemy were in motion.

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General Waſhington moves to the north ſide of the Brandywine river, in order to defend Philadelphia.

On the eleventh of September the Britiſh army moved forwards; the enemy, to the number of fourteen thouſand, retiring before them to the other ſide of the Brandywine river. Here the Americans halted, and poſted themſelves on ſome very ſtrong ground under cover of woods with intervals of open ground between them. Their advanced corps was ſtationed at Red Clay Creek. The Brandywine Creek runs into the Delaware at Wilmington, and it was indiſpenſably neceſſary for the Britiſh army to paſs over it in their route to Philadelphia. The enemy therefore ſecured, and reſolved to defend, the principal fording-places.

At Chad's Ford, the ſpot where it was judged moſt probable that the royal army would make an attempt, batteries were erected on the banks of the rivulet, with intrenchments that commanded the paſs.

While the enemy were occupied at Chad's Ford, lord Cornwallis, with one column of the army, conſiſting of two battalions of grenadiers, as many of light infantry, the Heſſian grenadiers, part of the ſeventy-firſt regiment, and two Britiſh brigades, made a circuit of ſome miles, and croſſed the forks of the Brandywine on the thirteenth of September, with an intention of gaining the enemy's rear. At the ſame time general Knyphauſen, with the ſecond diviſion, conſiſting of two Britiſh brigades, the Heſſians, and Wemys's corps of rangers, marched in a direct line to Chad's Ford; and attacked a detached body of the enemy that had croſſed the river, and were poſted on the ſouth ſide of it. This body, after ſome reſiſtance, was forced to repaſs the Brandywine under cover of their batteries.

Several pieces of cannon having been brought up and placed on the moſt commanding eminences, a ſharp cannonade enſued, which was anſwered by the enemy's batteries on the other ſide of the river. The attention of the Americans was thus amuſed, in order that lord Cornwallis might make his paſſage good. As ſoon as this was known, by the firing of cannon in that quarter, and the evident confuſion of the enemy, general Knyphauſen, with his diviſion, began to paſs the ford, and with great bravery ſoon carried the batteries and intrenchments; the enemy relinquiſhing them, and leaving behind five pieces of cannon and an howitzer. Lord Cornwallis, on the other hand, as ſoon as he had croſſed the two branches of the river, took the road to Delworth, which led him upon the enemy's right.

Action at the Brandywine.

General Waſhington being informed of lord Cornwallis's movements, detached general Sullivan, with a conſiderable force, to oppoſe him. The general took poſſeſſion of the heights above Birmingham church, his left reaching towards the Brandywine, his artillery judiciouſly placed, and his flanks covered by woods. About four o'clock in the afternoon lord Cornwallis formed the line of battle, and began the attack. The Americans ſuſtained it with conſiderable intrepidity, but the impetuoſity of the Britiſh troops was not to be reſiſted. They ruſhed upon the enemy, and, in ſpite of a very ſpirited oppoſition, drove them into the woods on their rear. Nevertheleſs the enemy poſted themſelves a ſecond time in one of the woods, from which they were, after a deſperate reſiſtance, diſlodged and forced to retire. A general rout took place. A conſiderable part of the American army fled with precipitation, in ſmall and confuſed parties, by different roads, towards Philadelphia, Lancaſter, and Reading, while general Waſhington, and the corps he was able to keep together, fled with his cannon and baggage to Cheſter; where he remained, within eight miles of the Britiſh army, till next morning, when he marched by Derby to Philadelphia. Here he ſtaid three days, collecting as many of his troops as he poſſibly could, and recruiting from his magazines the ſtores he had loſt in battle. On the third day after the engagement he aſſembled his troops, and marched up the north ſide of the Schuylkill, which he croſſed at Sweed's Ford, and paſſed on to the road to Lancaſter. Meantime the Britiſh army under ſir William

Howe remained on the field of battle. The Americans ſuffered conſiderably in this action. Three hundred were killed, ſix hundred wounded, and near four hundred taken priſoners; they alſo loſt ſeveral pieces of artillery. The loſs on the part of the Britiſh was by no means in proportion to that of the enemy. Not above one hundred were killed, and four hundred wounded.

It may not be improper to mention here ſome circumſtances that evince the opinion which ſeveral European nations entertained of the preſent diſturbances. In the action at Brandywine the celebrated marquis de la Fayette, at that time a young man of ſpirit and enterpriſe, and a warm partiſan of the Americans, bore a command in the American army. Inſpired by enthuſiaſtic notions of liberty, he purchaſed and freighted a ſhip with military ſtores, and proceeding in it with ſeveral of his friends to America, preſented it to congreſs. His age was not more than nineteen, and when he departed from Paris he informed his wife that he was going to pay a viſit to his aunt in Italy. Several other French noblemen were officers in the American army, and two Poliſh noblemen exhibited in the battle of Brandywine, great proofs of bravery and attachment to the cauſe they had eſpouſed. On the evening after the battle, a party of the Britiſh was ſent to Wilmington, who took the governor of the Delaware ſtate, Mr. Mackenlie, out of his bed, and ſeized a ſhalloop lying in the creek, loaded with the rich effects of ſome of the inhabitants, together with the public records of the county; a large quantity of public and private money; all the papers and certificates belonging to the loan office and treaſury office; articles of plate, &c.

The victory does not ſeem to have been improved in the degree which circumſtances appeared to have admitted. When the left column of the Britiſh had turned Waſhington's right flank, his whole army was hemmed in: General Knyphauſen and the Brandywine in front; ſir William Howe and lord Cornwallis on his right; the Delaware in his rear; and the Chriſtiana river on his left. He was obliged to retreat twenty-three miles to Philadelphia, when the Britiſh lay within eighteen miles of it. Had the commander in chief detached general Knyphauſen's column in purſuit early next morning, general Waſhington might with eaſe have been intercepted, either at the heights of Crum Creek, nine miles; at Derby, fourteen; or at Philadelphia, eighteen miles, from the Britiſh camp; or the Schuylkill might have been paſſed at Gray's Ferry, only ſeventy yards over; and Philadelphia, with the American magazines, taken, had not the pontoons been improvidently left at New York as uſeleſs. Any one of theſe movements, it was thought, might have been attended with the total deſtruction of the American army. For ſome reaſon however, which it is impoſſible to divine, the commander in chief employed himſelf for ſeveral days in making ſlight movements, which could not by any poſſibility produce any important benefits to the Britiſh cauſe.

On the twentieth of September intelligence was received that general Wayne had concealed himſelf in the woods on the left wing of the army with fifteen hundred men, with an intention of haraſſing the rear of the Britiſh army. Major-general Grey was accordingly diſpatched at night to ſurpriſe him. The Britiſh general proceeded in this expedition with great ſecreſy and diſpatch, and in order that the ſurpriſe might be complete, he gave ſtrict orders that bayonets alone ſhould be uſed, and that not a gun ſhould be fired. This manœuvre had the deſired effect. General Wayne's outpoſts were ſurpriſed about one in the morning, and the Britiſh troops ruſhing immediately on the enemy's encampment, made a dreadful ſlaughter. Three hundred were killed and wounded, and one hundred taken priſoners. The reſt contrived to make good their retreat

General Wayne defeated.

with the loſs of all their baggage. On the part of the Britiſh the loſs was too trifling almoſt to be mentioned. One officer was killed, and ſeven privates were killed and wounded. The ſkill and energy of general Grey were very conſpicuous in this enterpriſe.

Royal army paſſes the Schuylkill.

On the twenty-third of September, ſir William Howe having ſecured the command of the Schuylkill, croſſed it with the whole army, advanced, on the twenty-ſixth, to German Town, and on the ſucceeding day lord Cornwallis, at the head of a ſtrong detachment, took peaceable poſſeſſion of Philadelphia.

Lord Cornwallis takes poſſeſſion of Philadelphia.

German Town conſiſts in one ſtreet two miles in length; and is diſtant from the capital of Penſylvania about ſeven miles. The Britiſh army, in their line of encampment, interſected this village near the centre, and almoſt at right angles. The Schuylkill covered the left wing; in the front of which were the German chaſſeurs. A battalion of light-infantry and the queen's American rangers covered the right wing in front; and at the head of the village, the fortieth regiment with another battalion of light-infantry were ſtationed. Three regiments detached under colonel Sterling, for the purpoſe of conveying ſtores and proviſions, lay at Cheſter; and a conſiderable body of troops, as already mentioned, under lord Cornwallis, at Philadelphia. The poſſeſſion of this place was a moſt important acquiſition, as it opened a communication between the northern and ſouthern provinces; and, if the Delaware were opened, between the army and the navy. So ſenſible were the Americans of its importance, that they had formerly reſolved, if ever it ſhould be in real and imminent danger of falling into the hands of the Britiſh, to commit it to the flames.

But, although German Town and Philadelphia had been for ſome time occupied by the Britiſh troops, the communication was not yet free down the river to the fleet.

CHAP. XV.

American Batteries and other Means of Defence—Attacked—Action at German Town—At Red Bank—Mud Iſland and Red Bank taken—American Fleet burnt—Removal of the royal Army to Whitemarſh.

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American batteries and other means of defence,

AS the Delaware is navigable to Philadelphia and even beyond it, the congreſs, whoſe reſidence was at that city until it was taken by ſir William Howe, very early endeavoured to render it inacceſſible to the Britiſh fleet. In deviſing contrivances for this purpoſe, Dr. Frankin is ſaid, before his departure for France, to have aſſiſted. Three rows of chevaux de frize, compoſed of immenſe beams of timber bolted and faſtened together, and ſtuck with iron pikes faſtened in every direction, were ſunk acroſs the channel, a little below the place where the Schuylkill empties itſelf into the Delaware. The lower line of chevaux de frize was commanded by ſome works, erected on the Jerſey ſhore, at Billing's Port; and the upper by an incloſed fort, mounting heavy cannon, and ſituated on a marſhy iſland, called Mud Iſland, being formed by an accumulation of ſand and vegetable mould, near the Penſylvania ſhore; and on the oppoſite ſhore, by a redoubt and intrenchment, at a place called Red Bank; the redoubt being conſtructed on high and commanding ground, ſerved alſo as a protecton for the provincial water force, which might occaſionally retire under the guns of that work for ſafety. This water force, which was ſtationed between the two forts, conſiſted of fourteen row-gallies, carrying each one piece of heavy ordnance—two floating batteries, carrying nine guns each—and a number of fire-ſhips and rafts. Towards the end of September, a detachment from the Britiſh army, conſiſting of three regiments under colonel Sterling, had been paſſed over from Cheſter to the Jerſey ſhore, for the purpoſe of reducing the provincial works of Billing's Port, which, on the approach of that detachment, were abandoned by the garriſon, and immediately diſmantled. The lower line of chevaux de frize being thus left without defence from the ſhore, an attempt was made to remove it by captain Hammond of the Roebuck, who commanded the Britiſh naval force in the Delaware; in which he ſo far ſucceeded, notwithſtanding the oppoſition made by the enemy's row-gallies and floating batteries, as to make an opening ſufficient to admit the largeſt ſhips of the fleet; but ſtill the two other rows of chevaux de frize remained; and the forts which defended them were yet in the poſſeſſion of the Americans. Things were in this ſituation, when lord Howe arrived with the fleet from the Cheſapeak. Lord Howe, as ſoon as he received intelligence of the ſucceſs of the army at Brandywine, left the Elk river, and quitting the Capes of Virginia on the twenty-third of September, ſteered his courſe towards the Delaware, where he arrived on the eighth of October. As the paſſage to Philadelphia was yet impracticable, the fleet was brought to anchor, on the weſt ſhore, from the town of Newcaſtle down to Reedy Iſland.

The voyage from the Capes to the Delaware was boiſterous; and the attempt to get up that river required great abilities, caution, and prudence; for the obſtructions that had deterred the fleet from entering the Delaware before, had been conſiderably increaſed. The Americans had almoſt completed an extenſive work—wooden piers for defending the approaches to the line of ſunken frames that croſſed the channel of the river. To remove theſe obſtructions, ſo as to open a communication between the fleet and the army, was an object of the utmoſt importance, but which could not be accompliſhed without previouſly reducing the forts, by which they were defended. Preparations for this purpoſe were accordingly made immediately after the arrival of the fleet. Some heavy cannon were landed from the ſhips, and batteries were begun on Province Iſland, which was formed by the conflux of the rivers Schuylkill and Delaware, and was oppoſite to the fort on Mud Iſland; but, owing to the ſwampineſs of the ground, the works advanced ſlowly, and the approaches were made with difficulty. Major Vatap, of the tenth regiment, who commanded a detachment of the Britiſh on Province Iſland, to cover the working parties, abandoned moſt ſhamefully his artillery, upon the Americans having landed a ſmall body of men on the iſland. From the gallantry, however, of a ſubaltern officer, the artillery was retaken, and the enemy compelled to retire. Major Vatap was obliged to quit the ſervice, and ſell out below the regulated price.

As ſoon as the enemy perceived the deſigns of the Engliſh, they diſpatched two frigates and a ſchooner, with ſome row-gallies, to demoliſh the batteries and cannonade the town. For ſome time the veſſels kept up a heavy fire upon the town, but, on the falling of the tide in the Delaware, one of the frigates ran a-ground, and was taken; the reſt of the fleet were under the neceſſity of retreating as faſt as poſſible.

Action at German Town:

General Waſhington, who was at this time encamped at Skippack Creek, on the eaſtern ſide of the Schuylkill, about ſeventeen miles from German Town, being reinforced by fifteen hundred troops from Peek's Kill, and one thouſand Virginians, on receiving intelligence of the large detachments that were ſent to take poſſeſſion of Philadelphia, to cover the convoys and deſtroy the works on the

Delaware, formed the deſign of ſurpriſing the camp at German Town. At ſix in the evening of the third of October, the enemy quitted their encampment at Skippack Creek, and under cover of a thick fog, made an attack on the troops poſted at the head of the village, at dawn of day, on the fourth. There, after a vigorous reſiſtance, they were driven into the village, and general Waſhington advancing with his army, divided into five columns, endeavoured to enter the north end of the village, in order to ſeparate the Britiſh force, and thereby to enſure ſucceſs to the different attacks on the Britiſh flanks. The fortieth regiment, which lay at the head of the village, had been under the neceſſity of retreating before the enemy; nevertheleſs lieutenant-colonel Muſgrave, who commanded this regiment, by his addreſs and activity had contrived to keep five companies of the regiment together. In order to impede the progreſs of the enemy he threw them into a large ſtone houſe in the village, that lay in the front of the enemy. This gallant conduct arreſted the Americans in their career, and in the event prevented the ſeparation of the right and left wings of the Britiſh troops; by which means time was afforded to the reſt of the Britiſh line to get under arms. General Waſhington immediately ordered a brigade to ſurround the houſe. Colonel Muſgrave, however, and his brave men, refuſed to ſurrender, and from the windows pouring a heavy fire upon the enemy, did conſiderable execution. Four pieces of cannon were then brought againſt him, the fire of which he continued to brave till he received aſſiſtance from major-general Grey, who, with the third brigade, and brigadier-general Agnew with the fourth brigade, attacked the enemy with great ſpirit. The engagement for ſome time was very warm. At length, part of the right wing attacking the enemy on the oppoſite ſide of the village, they

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gave ground, and retired with great precipitation. They attempted to rally upon ſome riſing grounds, and made a ſhew of renewing the action; but it was only a feint to ſecure a retreat. This they effected, with all their artillery, under cover of the fog, which rendered it difficult for the Britiſh troops to diſcover their movements. This fog, which had at firſt been ſo advantageous to the Americans, was alleged to have greatly contributed to the diſappointment of the ſcheme, inaſmuch as it prevented the different bodies of the American army from diſcovering each other's operations.

On the part of the Engliſh ſix hundred were killed and wounded. Among the former were brigadier-general Agnew, and colonel Bird, officers of diſtinguiſhed reputation. The loſs on the ſide of the Americans was ſuppoſed to amount to between two and three hundred killed, ſix hundred wounded, and above four hundred made priſoners. General Naſh and a great number of officers were among the ſlain. The neglect of the commander in chief in the action at German Town was extreme. He was acquainted with the intentions of general Waſhington on the evening before the attack, and therefore could have provided againſt it. Had he adopted ſuch a mode of conduct, the American army would certainly have been deſtroyed. It was the general opinion of the officers of both armies, that, had the Americans advanced immediately, inſtead of attaching the fortieth regiment, the total defeat of the Britiſh muſt have enſued. But the delay occaſioned by the ſeveral attempts to reduce Chew's Houſe afforded time for the Britiſh line to get under arms; and that circumſtance was juſtly conſidered as the ſalvation of the royal army. Notwithſtanding the importance of the capture of Philadelphia, it was ſeen that the army could not maintain itſelf during the winter, unleſs Mud Iſland ſhould be reduced. In order to effect the reduction of this, the royal army removed from German Town to Philadelphia. The enemy after the action at German Town had returned to their old camp at Skippack Creek.

In conſequence of meaſures concerted between the commander in chief and lord Howe, a joint attack was reſolved to be made on Mud Iſland and Red Bank.

Colonel Stirling, after deſtroying the American works at Billing's Port, ſaw the neceſſity of forming a poſt at Red Bank, not yet occupied by the enemy, it being of no great conſequence while they retained poſſeſſion of the other poſt juſt mentioned. But when they had loſt that ſtation, it became of the utmoſt importance, being the only key to the fort on Mud Iſland; the only ſpot from which it could be relieved or ſupplied. And, had this poſt been taken and occupied by Britiſh troops, the fort and water-guard would have been placed in the midſt of a triangle, and conſtantly expoſed to the cannon from poſts on each of its ſides; from Red Bank on the eaſt, the Province Iſland on the weſt ſide of the Delaware, and from the men of war on the ſouth in the river below. Poſſeſſed of theſe, colonel Stirling deſired permiſſion to take poſſeſſion of Red Bank, but it was not granted him. The rebels, taking advantage of this blunder, immediately fortified it: And, under its cannon, they conſtantly covered their water-guard, which ſallied out from this advantageous poſt when they wiſhed, either to ſupply or relieve the fort, or to annoy the ſhips of war. The ſubſiſtence of the Britiſh troops in Philadelphia depended ſo much on the ſurrender of this fort, that Waſhington exerted every nerve to preſerve it. He offered one hundred pounds extraordinary bounty to every ſoldier who ſhould ſerve in defending it during the ſiege. Theſe men were relieved every ſix hours from Red Bank, and therefore the defence was extremely obſtinate.

On the nineteenth of October the Britiſh army was withdrawn from German Town, and encamped in the immediate vicinity of Philadelphia, as a more convenient ſituation, from which detachments might be made, and occaſional reinforcements ſent to reduce the forts upon the river: And ſoon after this movement an attempt was made to carry the redoubt and intrenchment at Red Bank by aſſault. The execution of this enterpriſe was intruſted to colonel Donop, a brave and high-ſpirited German officer, who, with three battalions of Heſſian grenadiers, the regiment of Mirbach, and the infantry chaſſeurs, paſſed the Delaware, from Philadelphia, on the twenty-firſt of October, and, on the following day in the afternoon, reached the place of his deſtination. A diſpoſition for the attack was inſtantly made, and the brave Donop, with undaunted firmneſs, led on his troops to the aſſault, through a tremendous fire, not only from the works at Red Bank, but from the provincial gallies and floating batteries upon the river; and whilſt deſtruction every inſtant thinned their ranks, the German battalions advanced, unmoved, to the charge, and forced an extenſive outwork, from which the enemy were driven, and obliged to flee for ſhelter within the redoubt. By this time the intrepid Donop had fallen, his thigh having been fractured by a muſket ſhot, and the ſecond in command was alſo wounded. The redoubt was found to be more than eight feet high, with a parapet boarded and frized, and could not be forced without ſcaling-ladders. Why the aſſailants were not furniſhed with this neceſſary implement has not been explained; but for want of it, in the moment of victory, and with the object of the enterpriſe within their graſp, they were obliged precipitately to retire through ſuch a fire as that under which they had advanced, leaving

at Red Bank.

leaving their brave commander behind them, who died of his wound ſome few days after, whilſt a priſoner in the hands of the Americans.

But this was not the only misfortune that happened at this time. It was intended that a part of the fleet, by moving up the river as far as it could go, ſhould make a diverſion in favour of the attack by land. For this purpoſe the Auguſta, Roebuck, Liverpool, Pearl, and Merlin ſloop, were ordered to paſs through the opening in the lower chevaux de frize, and be in readineſs. And as ſoon as Donop's attack commenced theſe ſhips ſlipped their cables and moved ſlowly up the river with the flood tide; but the natural courſe of the channel having been altered by the artificial obſtructions thrown acroſs it, and ſand-banks being collected where there were none before, two of theſe ſhips, the Auguſta and the Merlin, unfortunately got a-ground a little below the ſecond line of chevaux de frize. At the next tide of flood every exertion was made to get them off, but in vain, the flow of the tide having been prevented from riſing to its uſual height by a ſtrong northerly wind. It was not until the following morning that the ſituation of theſe ſhips was perceived by the enemy, when they began to fire upon them from their works, gallies, and floating batteries, and ſent down ſeveral fire-ſhips with the expectation of deſtroying them. The fire-ſhips were however towed off without doing any injury, by the activity and dexterity of the ſeamen; but, unfortunately, the Auguſta, by ſome accident, caught fire, and the flames, ſpreading ſo rapidly that they could not be got under, it was with the utmoſt difficulty that the greateſt part of the crew were ſaved. Only a few, and amongſt theſe the ſecond-lieutenant, chaplain, and gunner, periſhed in the flames. It now became neceſſary to remove with all haſte the frigates which lay near the Auguſta, that they might not ſuffer by her exploſion; and as the Merlin could not be got off, orders were given to abandon and deſtroy her. Such were the unfortuante conſequences of the attack on Red Bank fort.

In the mean time the preparations for reducing the fort on Mud Iſland were going forward on the weſtern ſhore of the Delaware; but, from the difficulty of conſtructing works in marſhy grounds, and the length of time required for tranſporting through ſwamps ſuch heavy ſtores as were indiſpenſably neceſſary, the batteries were not opened before the tenth of November. Immediately below Mud Iſland, and ranging nearly in a line with this, were two others, called Province and Hog Iſlands. Between theſe and the weſtern ſhore was a narrow channel of ſufficient depth to admit ſhips of a moderate draught of water. For ſome days, that part of the fleet which was deſtined to co-operate in the attack, was prevented by contrary winds from moving up the river; but on the fifteenth of November, the wind proving favourable, and every thing being in readineſs, the Vigilant armed ſhip, followed by a hulk, both of them mounted with heavy cannon, paſſed through between Province and Hog Iſland, and got into the channel behind, ſo as to bring their guns to bear upon that part of the fort which was leaſt provided with defences. At the ſame time two of the large ſhips, the Iſis and the Somerſet, with the Roebuck, and ſeveral frigates, ſailed up the main channel of the river, and lay as near the front of the fort as the ſecond line of the chevaux de frize would permit. The ſhips being thus diſpoſed, a heavy cannonade commenced as well from them as from the batteries on ſhore, which diſmounted ſeveral of the guns in the fort, and otherwiſe ſo damaged its defences, that the garriſon, fearful of an aſſault, quitted it the enſuing night, and were carried off by their ſhipping. Two days after the redoubt at Red Bank was alſo abandoned upon the approach of lord Cornwallis with a detach-

Mud Iſland and Red Bank taken.

a detachment from camp ſent to reduce it; and the provincial water force, being now no longer protected by the works on ſhore, quitted its ſtation, and retired up the river. Some few of the ſmaller gallies, by keeping cloſe on the Jerſey ſhore, paſſed Philadelphia in the night, and eſcaped. The reſt were abandoned and burnt. And thus a communication by the Delaware was at laſt opened between the navy and army.

American fleet burnt.

General Waſhington, after receiving a reinforcement of four thouſand men from the northern army, left his ſtrong ſituation at Skippack Creek, drew nearer to the Britiſh lines, and encamped at White Marſh, an advantageous ſtation, about fourteen miles from Philadelphia. A valley and a rivulet were in his front; and to the ſouth and eaſt an abbatis of trees, their top branches pointed and lying outwards.

Removal of the royal army to White Marſh, where general Waſhington was encamped.

Sir William Howe hoped that, in conſequence of this reinforcement, Waſhington might be tempted to riſque an engagement in the view of regaining poſſeſſion of the capital of Penſylvania. With this expectation he marched with the army from Philadelphia on the fourth of December at night, and on the following morning took poſt on Cheſnut Hill, in front of the right wing of the provincial encampment. Here the Britiſh army remained for two days, offering battle to the provincials, but the latter continued within their lines, except a corps of about one thouſand men, which being ſent out to ſkirmiſh with the light-infantry, under lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie, who were poſted in front, was quickly repulſed with loſs.

On the ſixth at night the army was again put in motion, and the following morning took poſt on Edge Hill, an eminence one mile in front of the enemy's left, which was occupied by a ſtrong corps of northern provincials, and from whence they were driven by the van-guard of the army under lord Cornwallis. The ſame morning, another out-poſt of the enemy was forced by a column of the army under major-general Grey, and ſo nearly ſurrounded by a rapid movement of the light-infantry of the guards to turn their left, that the provincials, in making their eſcape, were driven acroſs the fire of the centre and left of the general's diviſion, and ſuſtained a conſiderable loſs in killed and wounded.

During all this time general Waſhington remained quiet within his lines; and ſir William Howe, ſeeing no proſpect of being able to provoke him to an engagement, and, after having viewed the right, left, and centre, of his encampment, judging it unadviſable to attack him in his preſent ſtrong poſition, returned on the eighth with the army to Philadelphia: The enemy ſtill keeping ſo cloſe within their lines, that the rear-guard of the army under lord Cornwallis, which did not leave its ground till four in the afternoon, was ſuffered to retire unmoleſted. It was generally expected that the commander in chief would have made ſome farther attempts on general Waſhington. It is true he made ſome movements on the enemy's front, right, and left, but none on their rear, where they were vulnerable without difficulty. By the ſame movement he would have cut off Waſhington from his baggage and proviſions, which lay five miles diſtant. The American general dreaded this, and was prepared for flight. Our troops, notwithſtanding, retired, to the ſurpriſe of all who were acquainted with the ground on which general Waſhington was encamped, and the variety of excellent roads that led round to his rear. It was even well known that Waſhington's army was under the greateſt apprehenſion, and conſtantly expecting the neceſſity of attempting a hazardous movement to eſcape.

Not long after the retreat of the Britiſh troops from White Marſh, general Waſhington quitted his camp at that place in the night, croſſed the Schuylkill, and took poſt at Valley Forge, about twenty-ſix miles diſtant from Philadelphia.

Had the American army retired to Lancaſter, York, and Carliſle, the neareſt towns where they could have been accommodated with winter-quarters, a large and fertile diſtrict of country would have been left open for the Britiſh troops to forage in at pleaſure, the inhabitants of which being left without protection might have been tempted to accept of thoſe pardons which were ſo liberally offered, and to ſubmit themſelves again, and become reconciled to the authority of the mother-country.

The American general, moved by theſe conſiderations, determined to remain during the winter in the poſition which he then occupied at Valley Forge, recommending it to his troops to build huts in the woods for ſheltering themſelves from the inclemency of the weather. And it is perhaps one of the moſt ſtriking traits in general Waſhington's character, that he poſſeſſed the faculty of gaining ſuch an aſcendancy over his raw and undiſciplined followers, moſt of whom were deſtitute of proper winter clothing, and otherwiſe unprovided with neceſſaries, as to be able to prevail upon ſo many of them to remain with him, during the winter, in ſo diſtreſsful a ſituation. With immenſe labour he raiſed wooden huts, covered with ſtraw and earth; which formed very uncomfortable quarters. On the eaſt and ſouth an intrenchment was made; the ditch ſix feet wide and three in depth—the mound not four feet high, very narrow, and ſuch as might eaſily have been beat down by cannon. Two redoubts were alſo begun, but never completed. The Schuylkill was on his left, with a bridge acroſs. His rear was moſtly covered by an impaſſable precipice formed by Valley Creek, having only a narrow paſſage near the Schuylkill. On the right his camp was acceſſible with ſome difficulty, but the approach on his front was on ground nearly on a level with his camp. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate deſcription of his miſery in this ſituation. His army was deſtitute of almoſt every neceſſary of clothing, nay, almoſt naked; and very often on ſhort allowance of proviſions; an extreme mortality raged in his hoſpitals, nor had he any of the moſt proper medicines to relieve the ſick. There were perpetual deſertions of parties from him of ten to fifty at a time. In three months he had not four thouſand men, and theſe by no means to be termed effective. Not leſs than five hundred horſes periſhed from want and the ſeverity of the ſeaſon. He had often not three days proviſion in his camp, and at times not enough for one day. In this infirm and dangerous ſtate he continued from December to May, during all which time every perſon expected that the commander in chief would have ſtormed or beſieged his camp, the ſituation of which equally invited either attempt. To have poſted two thouſand men on a commanding ground near the bridge, on the north ſide of the Schuylkill, would have rendered his eſcape on the left impoſſible; two thouſand men placed on a like ground oppoſite the narrow paſs, would have as effectually prevented a retreat by his rear; and five or ſix thouſand men, ſtationed on the front and right of his camp, would have deprived him of flight on thoſe ſides. The poſitions were ſuch, that, if any of the corps were attacked, they could have been inſtantly ſupported. Under ſuch propitious circumſtances what mortal could doubt of ſucceſs? But our army, neglecting all theſe opportunities, was ſuffered to continue at Philadelphia, where the whole winter was ſpent in diſſipation. A want of diſcipline and proper ſubordination pervaded the whole army; and if diſeaſe and ſickneſs thinned the American army encamped at Valley Forge, indolence and luxury perhaps did no leſs injury to the Britiſh troops at Philadelphia. During the winter a very unfortunate inattention was ſhown to the feelings of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, whoſe ſatisfaction ſhould have been vigilantly conſulted, both from gratitude and from intereſt. They experienced many of the horrors of civil war. The ſoldiers inſulted and plundered them; and their houſes were occupied as barracks, without any compenſation being made to them. Some of the firſt families were compelled to receive into their habitations individual officers, who were even indecent enough to introduce their miſtreſſes into the manſions of their hoſpitable entertainers. This ſoured the minds of the inhabitants, many of whom were Quakers.

But the reſidence of the army at Philadelphia occaſioned diſtreſſes which will probably be conſidered, by the generality of mankind, as of a more grievous nature. It was with difficulty that fewel could be got on any terms. Proviſions were moſt exorbitantly high. Gaming of every ſpecies was permitted, and even ſanctioned. This vice not only debauched the mind, but, by ſedentary confinement, and the want of ſeaſonable repoſe, enervated the body. A foreign officer held the bank at the game of pharo, by which he made a very conſiderable fortune; and but too many reſpectable families in Britain have to lament its baneful effects. Officers who might have rendered honourable ſervice to their country, were compelled, by what was termed a bad run of luck, to diſpoſe of their commiſſions, and return pennyleſs to their friends in Europe. The father who thought he had made a proviſion for his ſon by purchaſing a commiſſion for him in the army, ultimately found that he had put his ſon to ſchool to learn the ſcience of gambling, not the art of war. Diſſipation had ſpread through the army, and indolence, and want of ſubordination, its natural concomitants: For if the officer be not vigilant, the ſoldier will never be alert.

Sir William Howe, from the manners and religious opinions of the Philadelphians, ſhould have been particularly cautious: For this public diſſoluteneſs of the troops could not but be regarded by ſuch people as a contempt of them, as well as an offence againſt piety; and it influenced all the repreſentations which they made to their countrymen reſpecting the Britiſh. They inferred from it alſo, that the commander could not be ſufficiently intent on the plans of either conciliation or ſubjugation; ſo that the opinions of the Philadelphians, whether erroneous or not, materially promoted the cauſe of congreſs. During the whole of this long winter of riot and diſſipation, general Waſhington was ſuffered to continue, with the remains of his army, not exceeding five thouſand effective men at moſt, undiſturbed at the Valley Forge: Conſiderable arrears of pay due to them; almoſt in a ſtate of nature, for want of clothing; the Europeans in the American ſervice diſguſted, and deſerting in great numbers, and indeed in companies, to the Britiſh army; and the natives tired of the war. Yet, under all theſe favourable circumſtances for the Britiſh intereſt, no one ſtep was taken to diſlodge Waſhington, whoſe cannon were frozen up, and could not be moved. If ſir William Howe had marched out in the night, he might have brought Waſhington to action; or if he had retreated, he muſt have left his ſick, cannon, ammunition, and heavy baggage behind. A nocturnal attack on the Americans would have had this further good effect: It would have depreſſed the ſpirit of revolt, confirmed the wavering, and attached them to the Britiſh intereſt. It would have opened a paſſage for ſupplies to the city, which was in great want of proviſions for the inhabitants. It would have ſhaken off that lethargy in which the Britiſh ſoldiers had been immerged during the winter. It would have convinced the well-affected that the Britiſh leader was in earneſt. If Waſhington had retreated, we could have followed. With one of the beſt appointed, in every reſpect, and fineſt armies (conſiſting of at leaſt fourteen thouſand effective men) ever aſſembled in any country, a number of officers of approved ſervice, wiſhing only to be led to action, this dilatory commander, ſir William Howe, dragged out the winter, without doing any one thing to obtain the end for which he was commiſſioned. Proclamation was iſſued after proclamation, calling upon the people of America to repair to the Britiſh ſtandard, promiſing them remiſſion of their political ſins, and an aſſurance of protection in both perſon and property; but theſe promiſes were confined merely to paper. The beſt perſonal ſecurity to the inhabitants was an attack by the army, and the beſt ſecurity of property was peace; and this to be purchaſed by ſucceſsful war. For, had ſir William Howe led on his troops to action, victory was in his power, and conqueſt in his train. During ſir William Howe's ſtay at Philadelphia a number of diſaffected citizens were ſuffered to remain in the garriſon; theſe people were ever upon the watch, and communicated to Waſhington every intelligence he could wiſh for. Sir William Howe ought not to have ſuffered the avowedly hoſtile to remain in the city. A commander in chief ſhould form his plans with ſecreſy. Whenever any foraging parties were ſent from the garriſon, the enemy were always apprized of it. This will account why our ſupplies were always ſo ſcanty, and our rear always haraſſed. That war is neceſſary, in ſome caſes, is certain; but it is the duty of every commander to leſſen the horrors of war, and to abridge their period. Severity in the early part of the war would have been mercy in the end. Thouſands of lives would have been ſaved on both ſides; the enormous load of the national debt would not have ſwelled to its preſent amount; America might have been taught the neceſſity of peace; and Britain, the juſtice and policy of granting honourable terms. But, unfortunately for this country, the inſtant the war ſhould be at an end, the multiplication of pounds, ſhillings, and pence, would ceaſe to be carried on by individual characters, who wiſhed to make a fund, or aggregate ſum, to retire upon. In confirmation of the diſtreſs in the American army above related we ſhall here inſert a letter from the committee of congreſs.

A LET

CHAP. XV. 1777.

A LETTER from the Committee of Congreſs to the Preſident; found among the Papers of HENRY LAURENS, Eſq.

" SIR, *Camp at Valley Forge, Feb.* 12, 1778.

" WE had flattered ourſelves, that, before this time, the pleaſure of congreſs would be made known to us, reſpecting the quarter-maſter's department. We fear our letter upon this ſubject has miſcarried, or the conſideration of it yielded to other buſineſs. You will therefore pardon us, ſir, when we again ſolicit your attention to it, as an object of the laſt importance; on which not only the future ſucceſs of your arms, but the preſent exiſtence of your army, immediately depend. The influence of this office is ſo diffuſive through every part of your military ſyſtem, that neither the wiſdom of arrangement, the ſpirit of enterpriſe, or favourable opportunity, will be of any avail, if this great wheel in the machine ſtops, or moves heavily. We find ourſelves embarraſſed in entering on this ſubject, leſt a bare recital of facts ſhould carry an imputation (which we do not intend) on thoſe gentlemen who have lately conducted it. We are ſenſible, great and juſt allowances are to be made for the peculiarity of their ſituation, and we are perhaps not fully acquainted with all their difficulties. It is our duty, ſir, to inform you it is not our intention to cenſure; and be aſſured, nothing but a ſenſe of the obligation we are under, to poſtpone all other conſiderations to the public ſafety, could induce us to perform the unpleaſing taſk.—We find, ſir, the property of the continent diſperſed over the whole country; not an encampment, route of the army, or conſiderable road, but abounds with waggons, left to the mercy of the weather, and the will of the inhabitants; large quantities of intrenching tools have, in like manner, been left in various hands, under no other ſecurity that we can learn, than the honeſty of thoſe who have them in poſſeſſion. Not leſs than three thouſand ſpades and ſhovels, and the like number of tomahawks, have been lately diſcovered and collected in the vicinity of the camp, by an order from one of the general officers. In the ſame way, a quantity of tents and tent cloth, after having lain a whole ſummer in a farmer's barn, and unknown to the officer of the department, was lately diſcovered, and brought to camp by a ſpecial order from the general. From theſe inſtances, we preſume there may be many other ſtores yet unknown and uncollected, which require immediate care and attention.

"When, in compliance with the expectations of congreſs, and the wiſhes of the country, the army was thrown into huts, inſtead of retiring to more diſtant and convenient quarters, the troops juſtly expected every comfort which the ſurrounding country could afford. Among theſe, a providential care in the article of ſtraw, would probably have ſaved the lives of many of your brave ſoldiers who have now paid the great debt of nature. Unprovided with this, or materials to raiſe them from the cold and wet earth, ſickneſs and mortality have ſpread through their quarters in an aſtoniſhing degree. Notwithſtanding the diligence of the phyſicians and ſurgeons, of whom we hear no complaint, the ſick and dead liſt has increaſed one-third in the laſt week's returns, which was one-third greater than the week preceding; and, from the preſent inclement weather, will probably increaſe in a much greater proportion.—Nothing, ſir, can equal their ſufferings, except the patience and fortitude with which the faithful part of the army endure them. Thoſe of a different character deſert in conſiderable numbers.

"We muſt alſo obſerve, that a number of the troops have now ſome time been prepared for inoculation; but the operation muſt be delayed, for want of this [ſtraw] and other neceſſaries within the providence of this department. We need not point out the fatal conſequences of this delay in forming a new army, or the preſervation of this. Almoſt every day furniſhes inſtances of the ſmall-pox in the natural way. Hitherto ſuch vigilance and care has been uſed, that the contagion has not ſpread; but ſurely it is highly incumbent upon us, if poſſible, to annihilate the danger.

"We need not point out the effect this circumſtance will have upon the new-draughted troops, if not carefully guarded; they are too obvious to need enumeration. In conference with the forage-maſter on this ſubject (which, though in appearance trivial, is really important), he acquainted us, that, though out of his line, he would have procured it, if waggons could have been furniſhed him for that purpoſe.

"The want of horſes and waggons for the ordinary as well as extraordinary occaſions of the army, preſſes upon us, if poſſible, with equal force; almoſt every ſpecies of camp tranſportation is now performed by men, who, without a murmur, patiently yoke themſelves to little carriages of their own making, or load their wood and proviſions on their backs.—Should the enemy, encouraged by the growing weakneſs of your troops, be led to make a ſucceſsful impreſſion upon your camp, your artillery would now undoubtedly fall into their hands, for want of horſes to remove it.—But theſe are ſmaller and tolerable evils, when compared with the imminent danger of your troops, periſhing with famine, or diſperſing in ſearch of food. The commiſſaries, in addition to their ſupplies of live cattle, which are precarious, have found a quantity of pork in New Jerſey, of which, by a failure of waggons, not one barrel has reached the camp.

"The orders were given for that purpoſe as early as the fourth of January.—In yeſterday's conference with the general he informed us, that ſome brigades had been four days without meat; and that even the common ſoldiers had been at his quarters to make known their wants.—At preſent, ſir, there is not one gentleman of any rank in this department, though the duties of the office require a conſtant and unremitted attention. In whatever view, therefore, the object preſents itſelf, we truſt you will diſcern, that the moſt eſſential intereſts are connected with it. The ſeaſon of preparation for next campaign is paſſing ſwiftly away. Be aſſured, ſir, that its operations will be ineffectual, either for offence or protection, if an arrangement is not immediately made, and the moſt vigorous exertions uſed to procure the neceſſary ſupplies.—Permit us to ſay, that a moment's time ſhould not be loſt in placing a man of approved abilities and extenſive capacity at the head of the department, who will reſtore it to ſome degree of regularity and order; whoſe provident care will immediately relieve the preſent wants of the army, and extend itſelf to thoſe which muſt be ſatisfied, before we can expect vigour, enterpriſe, or ſucceſs.—When your committee reflect upon the increaſed difficulties of procuring waggons, horſes, tents, and the numerous train of articles dependent on this office, without which your army cannot even move; they feel the greateſt anxiety, leſt the utmoſt ſkill, diligence, and addreſs, will prove ineffectual to ſatisfy the growing demand. All other conſiderations vaniſh before this object; and we moſt earneſtly wiſh congreſs may be impreſſed in a proper degree with its neceſſity and importance.

" A report has reached us, that colonel Lutterlogh is a candidate for the office of quarter-maſter-general; we have therefore been led to make ſome inquiry into his character and conduct. We ſhould be far from doing injuſtice to his abilities and experience in a ſubordinate line; but, excluſive of the danger of entruſting ſo confidential an office to a ſtranger, whoſe attachment to this country muſt be light and tranſient, and whoſe intereſt may be ſo eaſily diſtinguiſhed from ours, we cannot find that he poſſeſſes talents or activity equal to this important office.—We find, in the courſe of the campaign, neceſſary tools and ſtores have often been wanting; important and

ſeaſonable

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ſeaſonable movements of the army delayed; in ſome inſtances, wholly fruſtrated; and favourable opportunities loſt, through the deficiencies of this department.—The rapid marches of our army, and unforeſeen diſaſters which attended it during the ſummer ſeaſon, partly claim ſome allowances; but that diſorder and confuſion prevail through the department, which requires ſome able hand to reform and reduce it, is a certain and melancholy truth.

"Unacquainted with the reſolution of congreſs with reſpect to general Schuyler, we have heſitated what further to propoſe. Time is ſo extremely precarious, that we are unwilling to loſe a ſingle unneceſſary moment; and have therefore been induced to extend our views to the diſapprobation of this gentleman, and make ſome proviſion for that event. A character has preſented itſelf, which, in a great degree, meets our approbation, judgment, and wiſhes. We have opened the ſubject to him, and it is now under his conſideration. When we are at liberty, we ſhall introduce him to your notice; but delicacy forbids our doing it, until he has made up his mind on the ſubject, and given his conſent to the nomination.—Another gentleman of extenſive connexions, great activity, and comprehenſive genius, but intirely in civil life, has alſo been propoſed. As he is at a diſtance, we have not been able to conſult him; and are reſtrained, by ſimilar motives of delicacy, from making his character and name a ſubject of diſcuſſion without his conſent.

"By the time we are favoured with the determination reſpecting general Schuyler, and he ſhould not be approved, we hope to be able to announce both theſe gentlemen for your conſideration.

"We are, with the greateſt regard and reſpect,

"SIR,

"Your moſt obedient, and very humble ſervants,

"(The Committee.)

"*To the Preſident of Congreſs.* (Signed) Fra. Dana."

It

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It muſt be confeſſed that, on the whole, the Britiſh arms under ſir William Howe were attended with ſucceſs; but this ſucceſs was never duly followed up and improved. That commander had ſeveral opportunities of defeating the American army, and thereby of putting an end to the war. At Long Iſland, in the Jerſeys, at Brandywine, at White Marſh, and at Valley Forge, fortune had placed the enemy within his graſp, but he declined to ſeize the offered advantage. None of his military exploits poſſeſſed either plan, object, or deciſion. And the only fruit derived from the ſeveral victories of ſir William Howe, during the campaign of 1777, amounted to no more than the acquiſition of good winter-quarters for the Britiſh army at Philadelphia.

CHAP. XVI.

Canadian Operations—General Burgoyne inveſted with the Command of the Northern Army—General Carleton, offended with this Appointment, reſigns his Government—Opinions on the Employment of the Savages—Number of Troops under General Burgoyne—Expedition under Colonel St. Leger—Burgoyne's Manifeſto—Ticonderoga and Mount Independence inveſted—The Forts abandoned by the Americans—American Galleys deſtroyed near Skeneſborough—Americans abandon their Works—Their Rear overtaken—General St. Clair arrives at Fort Edward—Americans repulſed by Colonel Hill—Americans abandon Fort Anne—Difficulties encountered in the March of the Royal Army to Fort Edward—Americans retire to Saratoga.

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Canadian operations.

IT will be neceſſary now to turn our attention from the ſouth to the north; from the plains of Penſylvania to thoſe of Canada: where, inſtead of victories mixed with loſs, we meet with nothing but diſappointment, diſaſter, and defeat.

General Burgoyne inveſted with the command of the northern army.

The adminiſtration of Great Britain reſolved to carry on the war upon the ſide of Canada and the Lakes with activity and energy. The command of this expedition was entruſted to general Burgoyne. Sir Guy Carleton was certainly, and with much reaſon, offended with this appointment, which, indeed, could not be juſtified on any grounds of reaſon or of prudence. General Burgoyne, without doubt, poſſeſſed bravery, and ſome military knowledge; but it muſt be allowed that general Carleton was better qualified for the important expedition, which, under his direction, would probably have been attended with ſucceſs. From his long reſidence in Canada, he knew more accurately than general Burgoyne, the ſituation of the country, the manners of the inhabitants, and the extent of its reſources; and he united greater authority with more military experience. He would have been more aware of the difficulties to be encountered, and better prepared for ſurmounting them. But general Burgoyne was a member of parliament, and it was one of thoſe miſerable expedients which the miniſter ſubſtituted for grandeur of deſign, to beſtow ſome of the moſt important employments, both military and naval, on men who were in the habits of oppoſing the meaſures of adminiſtration. By this pitiful policy he was enabled to ſecure himſelf againſt parliamentary attack, and to carry his meaſures more eaſily in the houſe of commons.

General Carleton, offended at this appointment, reſigns his government.

That general Carleton was offended with the appointment of general Burgoyne is ſufficiently evident, from his immediate reſignation of his government. Much was expected from this expedition, and, to do the miniſter juſtice, nothing was wanting on his part to render ſucceſs probable. A large body of veteran troops was ſent from England, well provided with every neceſſary, and great quantities of warlike ſtores were alſo tranſmitted in order to ſupply thoſe inhabitants who were expected to declare in favour of the Britiſh cauſe.

Opinions on the employment of the ſavages.

In addition to the ſtrength already poſſeſſed by the Engliſh in Canada, ſeveral nations of ſavages who inhabit the back ſettlements of that province, and the borders of the Weſtern Lakes, reſolved to take up arms againſt the Americans. The acceptance of their aſſiſtance has occaſioned much diſcuſſion, and a variety of opinions. General Burgoyne was certainly induced to adopt this meaſure from a knowledge of their warlike character, and from a well-grounded ſuppoſition that, if he refuſed their offers, they would inſtantly join the Americans. But he reſolved to bring them into action as little as poſſible. In the preceding year he did not make much uſe of them, and he determined to purſue, as far as he could with prudence, the ſame line of conduct in the preſent year. He knew that their object in all wars was murder, deſolation, and deſtruction; and though he certainly wiſhed to conquer the revolted Americans, yet he did not wiſh to exterminate them. His conduct however, in this reſpect, did not receive general approbation; for it was contended that partial ſeverity was general mercy, and that, to put a ſpeedy end to the rebellion, the moſt vigorous and reſolute meaſures ſhould be adopted. Among the opponents of general Burgoyne on this ſubject was the miniſter himſelf; who, accordingly, tranſmitted orders to general Carleton to uſe all his influence in ſecuring the aſſiſtance of the Indian nations. This he did ſo effectually, that he became fearful at length of obtaining a larger number than was neceſſary.

Number of troops under general Burgoyne.

The army under general Burgoyne conſiſted of Britiſh and German troops, amounting to ſeven thouſand one hundred and ſeventy-three men, excluſive of the corps of artillery. Of theſe the foreign troops amounted to near one half. This body of troops accorded very nearly with the plan ſubmitted to the miniſter by general Burgoyne. He had required eight thouſand regulars, rank and file, excluſive of the artillery, a corps of watermen, two thouſand Canadians, including hatchet-men, with a thouſand ſavages.

General Burgoyne was furniſhed with picked and experienced officers. The moſt eminent of theſe were major-general Philips, brigadier-generals Frazer, Powel, and Hamilton; the Brunſwick major-general Reideſel, and brigadier-general Specht. This large body of veteran troops was to be kept together as much as poſſible. In order to produce this effect, the inhabitants of Canada were commanded to furniſh men ſufficient to occupy the woods on the frontiers, to prevent deſertion, to procure intelligence, and to intercept all communication between the enemy and the malcontents in the province. They were alſo required to provide men for the completion of the fortifications at Sorel, St. John's, Chamblée, and Iſle aux Noix, for the carriage of proviſions, artillery, and ſtores, and for making roads. In addition to this, they were to furniſh an adequate quantity of horſes and carts.

Expedition under colonel St. Leger.

Colonel St. Leger, with a body of light troops and Indians, amounting to between ſeven and eight hundred men, having been previouſly detached by the way of Lake Ontario, and the Mohawk river, in order to make a diverſion in favour of the army, general Burgoyne ſet out from St. John's on the ſixteenth of June 1777.

The naval force, under the command of commodore Lutwych, preceded the army, and opened the way for its advances, detachments of Indians having been previouſly made from the river Bouquet, as well to act upon the enemy's convoys and communications on the ſide of Otter Creek, as to cover the reconnoitre of South Bay, through which country it was probable that the enemy would paſs, if Ticonderoga ſhould fall into the hands of the Britiſh. The fleet proceeded without any oppoſition, and, under its protection, the troops were landed about the middle of June, and encamped at a ſmall diſtance from Crown Point on the north ſide. The advanced parties of the enemy retired on the approach of our army.

At this place general Burgoyne thought proper to give the Indians a war-feaſt, and to make a ſpeech to them. The purport of it was, to induce them to refrain from cruelty, and to mitigate their natural ferocity.

Burgoyne's manifeſto.

Before the royal army advanced to Ticonderoga general Burgoyne iſſued a proclamation or manifeſto, in which, with a moſt ill-judged policy, he threatened to puniſh, with the utmoſt ſeverity, thoſe who refuſed to attach themſelves to the Britiſh cauſe. At the ſame time he magnified the ferocity of the ſavages, animadverting with peculiar emphaſis of diction on the eagerneſs which they diſcovered to butcher thoſe who continued hoſtile to the mother-country, whoſe intereſts they had eſpouſed. Having remained at Crown Point a few days, in order to reſt themſelves, and to eſtabliſh magazines, the whole army proceeded with caution to Ticonderoga, which place it was reſolved to inveſt.

Ticonderoga inveſted,

Ticonderoga is ſituated on the weſtern ſhore, a few miles to the northward of that narrow inlet which unites Lake George to Lake Champlain. Crown Point lies more northward than Ticonderoga, and is ſituated on an angle of land waſhed on two ſides by water flowing over rocks. A deep moraſs covered the third ſide, except in a ſmall part, where formerly the French had erected lines, which ſtill continued, and which the Americans had now ſtrengthened by additional works.

and Mount Independence.

Oppoſite to Ticonderoga, on the eaſtern ſhore, the Americans had with great induſtry fortified a high hill called Mount Independence. On the top of it, which is flat, a ſtar fort had been erected, containing extenſive barracks well ſupplied with artillery. The mountain ſtretched in a ſloping direction into the water, ſtrongly entrenched to its baſe, and well ſupplied with heavy artillery. Midway up the mountain, another battery was erected to cover the lower works. With infinite labour the Americans had united Ticonderoga and Mount Independence by a ſtrong bridge of communications over the inlet. Twenty-two ſunken piers ſupported the bridge at equal diſtances. Between the piers floats were placed, faſtened together with chains and rivets, and bound to the ſunken piers. On the Lake Champlain ſide of the bridge, a boom, compoſed of very large timber, was erected, faſtened together by rivetted bolts and double chains, made of iron an inch and a half ſquare. This bridge effectually prevented any attack by water from the northern ſide. But Ticonderoga, notwithſtanding its apparent ſtrength, had one diſadvantage to contend with. To the ſouthward of the bridge of communications was a hill, called Sugar Hill, which overlooked and commanded both the works at Ticonderoga, and on Mount Independence. This place the Americans were unable to fortify, on account of the want of men; general St. Clair, who commanded at Ticonderoga, not having above three thouſand men.

The royal army, when they left Crown Point, advanced with the greateſt circumſpection and prudence on both ſides of the Lake, the fleet keeping in the centre till the army had encloſed the enemy on the land ſide, and the fleet had arrived juſt out of cannon-ſhot of their works. On the approach of the right wing on the ſecond of July, the enemy inſtantly relinquiſhed and ſet fire to their works on the ſide of Lake George. Major-general Philips therefore immediately ſecured the poſſeſſion of an mportant place called Mount Hope, which commanded the enemy's ine, and cut off all communication with Lake George.

The royal army having arrived at Ticonderoga, proceeded with reat expedition and alacrity in conſtructing works neceſſary for the nveſtment of that place. By the fifth of July theſe works were ompleted, and a road made to the top of Sugar Hill for the conſtruction of a battery there. The enemy, diſcovering theſe vigorous operations, thought proper to hold a council of war, in which it was reſolved to evacuate Ticonderoga and Mount Independence immediately. In conſequence of this determination, their baggage, proviſions, and ſtores, were embarked in two hundred batteaux, and diſpatched up the ſouth river to Skeneſborough. The army took the Caſtle Town road, in order to reach Skeneſborough by land. The American general conceived that his retreat would be made

The forts abandoned by the Americans.

without any difficulty, on account of the obſtacles which the Engliſh muſt neceſſarily overcome before they could purſue him. The dawn of the day, on the ſixth of July, diſcovered this unexpected retreat. Commodore Lutwych immediately began to prepare for a purſuit by removing an immenſe work of framed timber ſunk in the water, and by cutting away the boom that obſtructed the paſſage, and which had coſt, in the completion of it, near twelve months labour. As ſoon as theſe obſtructions were removed (which taſk was effected by nine o'clock in the morning), captain Carter of the artillery, who commanded a brigade of gun-boats, gave chaſe, and purſued that diviſion of the enemy which was making its retreat by water. So great was the ſpeed with which he executed the truſt repoſed in him, that he overtook them near the Falls of Skeneſborough, engaged and captured ſome of their largeſt gallies, obliging them to ſet the others on fire, together with a conſiderable number of their batteaux.

American gallies deſtroyed near Skeneſborough.

The grand diviſion of the army under general Burgoyne, in gun-boats, the Royal George, and Inflexible frigates, approaching the Falls, were ſaluted by a diſcharge of cannon from the works at Skeenſborough. On this account the general thought proper to return and land his army at South Bay, where part of the batteaux of the enemy had taken refuge. Theſe would certainly have been deſtroyed if the day had not been too far advanced. Immediately on the landing of the Engliſh the enemy evacuated their ſtockade fort, and other works, to which, as well as to the mills and ſtorehouſes, they ſet fire previous to their departure.

The Americans abandon their works.

During theſe operations by water, brigadier-general Frazer, at the head of the advanced corps of grenadiers and light infantry, preſſed hard upon the rear of that diviſion of the enemy which had taken the route of Hubberton, and which he overtook at five o'clock on the morning of the ſixth of July. This diviſion conſiſted of near one thouſand five

Their rear overtaken.

five hundred of the beſt markſmen and choſen troops, under the command of colonel Francis. They were poſted on ſtrong ground, and received the attack of the Britiſh from behind breaſtworks compoſed of logs and old trees. General Frazer's detachment was not equal in point of number to the enemy; nevertheleſs he commenced the engagement, becauſe he expected a reinforcement of troops under the German general Reideſel. The Americans maintained their poſt with great reſolution and bravery. The reinforcement did not arrive ſo ſoon as was expected, and victory for a long time was doubtful. The arrival however of general Reideſel decided the fate of the day. Hearing the firing of guns he puſhed forwards with a ſmall number of men, and joined general Frazer with a full band of muſic playing. The enemy conceiving from this circumſtance that the whole of the German troops had advanced into the field, immediately retreated with great precipitation.

The Americans loſt in this action their brave commander, ſeveral other officers, and above two hundred men killed. The ſame number were taken priſoners; and it was ſuppoſed that not leſs than ſix hundred wounded died in the woods.

The loſs on the part of the Britiſh did not exceed twenty officers, none, except major Grant, of any rank; and about one hundred and twenty men killed and wounded. During this engagement general St. Clair was at Caſtle Town, about ſix miles diſtant from the field of battle. Immediately on receiving intelligence of this defeat, he bent his courſe to the woods on his left, fearful of being intercepted at Fort Anne, but yet uncertain whether he ſhould proceed to the upper part of the Connecticut, or to Fort Edward. In the mean time a party of the enemy having taken the road by Wood Creek, in order to proceed beyond Fort Anne, after their retreat from Skeneſborough, were purſued by colonel Hill and the ninth regiment, and overtaken near Fort Anne. A warm engagement immediately commenced, the enemy having infinitely the advantage in point of number. But colonel Hill had poſted himſelf in ſuch a judicious manner, that all the attacks of the enemy in front were ineffectual. A diſpoſition was then made to ſurround him, which the Britiſh commander, with admirable dexterity, avoided, by changing his ſituation in the heat of the action. The engagement ſtill continued, with various ſucceſs, for three hours, when the Americans were repulſed with great ſlaughter, and forced to retreat, after ſetting fire to Fort Anne, to Fort Edward. The artillery loſt, by the evacuation of the northern poſts, and taken or deſtroyed in the armed veſſels at Skeneſborough, was prodigious, amounting to no leſs than one hundred and twenty-eight pieces, ſerviceable and unſerviceable. The loſs of flower, biſcuit, pork, and beef, was alſo very conſiderable. At Fort Edward, where general Schuyler was joined by general St. Clair on the twelfth, after a fatiguing march, the whole ſtrength of the Americans did not exceed four thouſand four hundred men, including militia. It may not be improper to relate here one of thoſe ſtratagems in which the genius of the Americans, during the whole courſe of the war, was remarkably fertile. Schuyler took out of a canteen with a falſe bottom, a letter from a perſon in the intereſt of the provincials to general Sullivan, and prepared an anſwer to it, drawn up in ſuch a ſtrain as to perplex and diſtract Burgoyne, and leave him in doubt what courſe to follow. This letter, which fell, as was intended, into the Engliſh general's hands, had the deſired effect; for he was completely duped and puzzled by it for ſeveral days, and at a loſs whether to advance or retreat.

General Burgoyne, after remaining ſome time at Skeneſborough, left that place, with an intention of taking the road that leads to Hudſon's River, and thence to Albany, in order to open a communication with Lake George, on which he had embarked the heavy artillery and baggage. In this undertaking, the difficulties which the royal army had to encounter were infinite. Swamps and moraſſes were to be paſſed. Bridges were to be conſtructed, not only over creeks, but over ravines and gullies. The roads were to be cleared of the foreſt trees, which had been felled and diſpoſed in ſuch a manner as to interſect each other. Notwithſtanding, however, all theſe obſtacles, in a ſultry ſeaſon of the year, and in a cloſe country, which the numerous inſects render almoſt intolerable to Europeans, the royal army endured this amazing fatigue with great cheerfulneſs, and oppoſed themſelves to difficulty and danger with untired perſeverance and unabated fortitude. This general has, with much reaſon, been blamed for adopting this difficult and tardy mode of conduct; by returning to Ticonderoga, and embarking again on Lake George, he might have eaſily proceeded to Fort George, whence there was a waggon-road to the place of his deſtination, Fort Edward. The reaſon he gave for not purſuing this line of conduct was, that a retrograde motion would have checked the vigour and animation of the troops. Whether the mode he choſe to adopt was likely to increaſe them it is not very difficult to determine. As ſoon as the Britiſh troops had ſecured the poſſeſſion of Skeneſborough, that active officer major-general Philips returned to Lake George, to tranſport the artillery, proviſions, and baggage, over the lake, to Fort George, and thence by land to Fort Edward, on Hudſon's River, together with a large number of boats and batteaux for the uſe of the army in the intended deſcent to Albany. General Schuyler, who at this time commanded the northern American army, had poſted himſelf, immediately after the affair of Hubberton, as already obſerved, at Fort Edward. On the advance of the royal army he retreated down Hudſon's River to Saratoga, where he iſſued a proclamation calculated to counteract the effect intended to be pro-

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duced by the manifeſto publiſhed by general Burgoyne. The royal army, on account of the numberleſs difficulties they had to encounter, advanced but ſlowly ; and it was not till the thirtieth of July that they arrived on Hudſon's River. Here their progreſs was checked for ſome time, becauſe it was neceſſary, before they could proceed, that the proviſions, ſtores, and other neceſſaries, which had been brought to Fort George from Ticonderoga, by general Philips, ſhould be embarked. The army of courſe was immediately employed in the proſecution of this ſervice.

CHAP. XVII.

Difficulties experienced at Fort Edward—Colonel St. Leger's Expedition—Detachment to Bennington—Baum and Breyman defeated—Fort Stanwix inveſted—Attempt to relieve it by General Harkemer—St. Leger obliged to raiſe the Siege of Fort Stanwix—General Gates takes the Command of the American Army in the North—Action at Still Water—Diſtreſſed Situation of General Burgoyne—Deſertion of the Indians—Retreat to Saratoga—Royal Army nearly ſurrounded—Convention with General Gates.

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THE delays which had been occaſioned by the route which general Burgoyne thought proper to take, had afforded time for the Americans to recover their fortitude and to recruit their ſtrength. Where the Mohawk falls into Hudſon's River, about eight miles from Albany, is an iſland in the ſhape of an half-moon, call Still Water. On this place general Schuyler, who had aſſembled about two thouſand ſeven hundred men at Saratoga, on receiving a reinforcement of men and artillery, under the command of general Arnold, poſted his army, in order to check the progreſs of colonel St. Leger, who early in June had been detached from Laſhene, ſix miles from Montreal, by the way of Lake Ontario and the Mohawk River, in order, as already obſerved, to make a diverſion in favour of the main army. He had under his command a conſiderable number of ſavages, who, in ſpite of general Burgoyne's addreſs to them, could not be reſtrained from the commiſſion of ſeveral

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Difficulties experienced at Fort Edward. Colonel St. Leger's expedition.

veral acts of ferocity. General Burgoyne ſtill remained in the neighbourhood of Fort Edward, where, on account of the difficulty of bringing the ſtores from Fort George to Hudſon's River, the army began to experience great hardſhips. At this juncture he received intelligence that colonel St. Leger had advanced up the St. Lawrence, and had commenced his operations againſt Stanwix, a fort ſituated on a riſing ground at the upper end of the Mohawk River, about three hundred yards from its ſource, and about half a mile from the ſource of Wood Creek, which runs into Lake Onida, and through the Onandigo into Lake Ontario. General Burgoyne ſaw the neceſſity of co-operating with colonel St. Leger, and of immediately making a rapid movement forward. But this intention could not be carried into execution under the preſent circumſtances. Ox-teams, carriages, and other neceſſaries, were indiſpenſably neceſſary; to procure which, the commander in chief reſolved to detach a body of troops to Bennington, a place ſituated between the forks of the Hoſick River, and about twenty-four miles to the eaſtward of Hudſon's River. The northern army received ſupplies of cattle, proviſions, and ſtores, from the New England provinces by way of the Connecticut, Mancheſter, and Arlington; which ſupplies were depoſited at Bennington. On this expedition the German-colonel Baum was diſpatched with about ſix hundred men, moſtly Germans, including a detachment of Reideſel's dragoons. This number was in every reſpect too ſmall. A loyaliſt who was well acquainted with the road, and had undertaken to accompany colonel Baum, ſtated to general Burgoyne that the expedition required a force of not leſs than three thouſand men; for the roads were very bad, through a thick woody country, and the tardineſs of the German method of marching would, he knew, enable the enemy to prepare for their reception. The general, however, paid no attention to the repre-

Detachment to Bennington.

ſentation of this gentleman, whom he piqued on the point of honour. The idea of ſending German troops on this ſervice was oppoſed by ſome of the officers of the army; but particularly by general Frazer, who, it is ſaid, not only remonſtrated with general Burgoyne, but reduced his remonſtrance into writing. The Germans were heavy and tardy in marching, and, as uſual, were loaded with accoutrements that prevented thoſe exertions which ſuch an expedition required. In the whole army a corps could not have poſſibly been found ſo unfit for a ſervice that required rapidity of motion as Reideſel's dragoons. Their very hats and ſwords weighed very nearly as much as the whole equipment of one of our ſoldiers. The worſt Britiſh regiment in the ſervice would with eaſe have marched two miles for their one. Colonel Baum was a brave officer, but he was totally unacquainted with the country, with the people, and with the language, inſomuch, it was reported, that he hardly knew, when he underſtood that they were riſing in arms, whether to conſider them as friends or foes.

Colonel Baum, accompanied by the loyaliſt as his guide, began his march. On the firſt day Baum ſurpriſed a large body of the enemy who had aſſembled for the purpoſe of oppoſing the progreſs of his detachment. This body of men, however, were, from a too refined principle of generoſity, on the ſucceeding day liberated by colonel Skeene, the inſpector-general, who joined the detachment and ſuperſeded the loyaliſt. This mode of conduct it was ſuppoſed would detach them from the American cauſe. Unfortunately however it produced an effect diametrically oppoſite; for this very body of the enemy were afterwards the moſt formidable opponents of the Engliſh at Bennington.

On the ſecond day's march of colonel Baum's detachment, they captured ſome cattle, and routed a ſmall part of the enemy near a village called Cambridge. Here the colonel received intelligence that the enemy were aſſembling from New Hampſhire, and the borders of Connecticut, for the defence of Bennington. Nevertheleſs he advanced as far as Walloon Creek, about ſeven miles from Bennington, where the intelligence he had received at Cambridge was confirmed, and no doubt remained of a formidable oppoſition. In conſequence of this information he thought proper to halt, and to poſt his detachment in as advantageous a manner as poſſible. This laſt meaſure he was induced to adopt from the repreſentations of a number of loyaliſts, under the command of a colonel Phiſter, who joined him, and acquainted him that the enemy were ſtrongly intrenched at Bennington, and that, as ſoon as they had received a reinforcement of men, it was intended to attack him. Colonel Baum having tranſmitted theſe particulars to general Burgoyne, a detachment of five hundred Germans, under the command of lieutenant-colonel Breyman, was ſent to his aſſiſtance. The roads were bad; nor was the mode in which the Germans marched calculated to promote expedition. They halted ten times in an hour to dreſs their ranks, which, through the embarraſſments attending their march, were liable to be broken at every turn.

The American general, Starke, with a body of one thouſand men from New Hampſhire and Maſſachuſet, was at this period on his route to join general Schuyler. Having received intelligence, however, of the approach of colonel Baum, he altered his courſe, and haſtened towards Bennington, where, joining the continental troops under colonel Warner, he ſet out on the ſixteenth of Auguſt, and, by ten o'clock in the morning, ſurrounded colonel Baum at St. Coieck's Mill, on Walloon Creek. The German officer, a ſtranger to the country, and to the language of the inhabitants, was at firſt perſuaded by the loyaliſts who had joined him that they were friends. General

Starke, however, commencing a furious attack upon him on all ſides, ſoon convinced him of their error. Nevertheleſs he reſolved to make a vigorous defence. For upwards of an hour he endured a terrible diſcharge of muſquetry, and during that period drove the enemy ſeveral times from the high ground on which they were ſtationed. But their number increaſing every moment, and colonel Baum having loſt his artillery, the German troops were under the neceſſity of retreating into the woods, leaving their commander mortally wounded on the field of battle. The ſavages who had accompanied colonel Baum behaved in a ſhameful manner, retreating at the commencement of the engagement. Fluſhed with this victory, the enemy advanced againſt the detachment under colonel Breyman, who, ignorant of the defeat of Baum, was advancing to his relief; but the tardineſs of their method of marching, added to the obſtacles which the roads preſented, had retarded their progreſs in ſuch a manner, that twenty-four hours were ſpent in marching ſixteen miles. The conſequence was, that Breyman came up juſt in time to join the fugitives of Baum's detachment. The Americans began a vigorous attack on Breyman, who was obliged to retreat, after having made a very gallant reſiſtance, and having expended all his ammunition. The loſs of men in theſe two engagements amounted to about ſix hundred.

Baum and Breyman defeated.

This was the firſt check which the northern army received, and indeed it muſt be chiefly attributed to the commander in chief. The troops he diſpatched on the expedition to Bennington were too few in number, and, being foreigners, improper for it. The general ought to have rectified his miſtake, when colonel Baum ſent for a reinforcement. Had he ſent Frazer's brigade, according to that general's requeſt, the fatal conſequences that enſued might in all probability have been prevented. Immediately after the defeat of colonel Baum, and the retreat of colonel Breyman, the royal army which had advanced to Saratoga, drew back.

Fort Stanwix inveſted.

In the mean time colonel St. Leger had commenced his attack upon Fort Stanwix, a ſmall ſquare log fort with four baſtions and a ſtockaded covered-way, without any other outworks. It was defended by colonels Ganſevert and Willet, and ſeven hundred men. The commencement of the ſiege was attended with very favourable circumſtances. On the fifth of Auguſt colonel St. Leger received intelligence that one thouſand provincials, under the command of general Harkemer, were advancing to the relief of the fort. Sir John Johnſon therefore, with a party of regulars, and a number of ſavages, was diſpatched into the woods, where he placed his men in ambuſh. The enemy advanced incautiouſly, and fell into the trap that was laid for them. A ſudden and unexpected fire was poured upon them from behind trees and buſhes, and the ſavages ruſhing from their concealment, made a dreadful ſlaughter with their ſpears and tomahawks. The enemy, though ſurpriſed and ſomewhat diſmayed, did not retreat precipitately, but recovered a riſing ground, which enabled them, by a kind of running fight, to preſerve about one third of their detachment. The number of killed and wounded on the part of the enemy amounted to near four hundred. The beſieged being informed of the approach of general Harkemer, made a ſally under colonel Willet, which was attended with ſome ſucceſs. Having received, however, intelligence of the defeat of the provincials, he and another officer undertook a very perilous expedition. They penetrated at the dead of night through the camp of the beſiegers, and traverſed a ſpace of fifty miles, through deſerts, woods, and moraſſes, in order to bring relief to the fort. The enemy perceiving that the artillery of the beſiegers was too light, and inſufficient to make any impreſſion on the defences of the fort, treated

Attempt to relieve it by general Harkemer.

every propoſal for a ſurrender with deriſion and contempt. On the twenty-ſecond of Auguſt a man belonging to the fort purpoſely conveyed himſelf into the Britiſh camp, and declared that he had eſcaped from the enemy at the hazard of his life, in order to inform the Britiſh commander that general Arnold, with two thouſand men and ten pieces of cannon, was advancing rapidly to raiſe the ſiege. He alſo acquainted him that general Burgoyne had been defeated, and his army cut to pieces. Colonel St. Leger was not intimidated by this information; nor did he give much credit to it; but it produced an immediate effect on the ſavages. The Britiſh commander called a council of their chiefs, and endeavoured, by the influence of ſir John Johnſon, and the other ſuperintendants, colonels Claus and Butler, to induce them not to withdraw their aſſiſtance. Every effort however was ineffectual; a large party of the ſavages departed while the council was ſitting; and the reſt threatened to follow their example, unleſs the Britiſh commander would immediately make a retreat. To this mortifying propoſition he was under the neceſſity of acceding. The tents were left ſtanding, and the artillery and ſtores fell into the poſſeſſion of the garriſon. One of the chief cauſes of the failure of ſucceſs in this expedition was the inadequacy of the force under colonel St. Leger, and the inſufficiency and ſmallneſs of the artillery, which were incapable of making any breach on the enemy's works. The ſuperiority of the ſavages in number over the Britiſh troops, was another cauſe. Their ſubſequent deſertion, and the approach of Arnold, rendered a retreat a meaſure of neceſſity, though it certainly might have been conducted in a more regular manner.

St. Leger obliged to raiſe the ſiege of Fort Stanwix.

With reſpect to the intimation of general Arnold's approach to the relief of Fort Stanwix, it was in part true. He was advancing up the Mohawk River with two thouſand men; but, in order to arrive more ſpeedily at the place of his deſtination, he had left the main

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General Gates takes the command of the American army in the north.

main body, and moved rapidly forward with a body of about nine hundred men. He arrived at the fort two days after the ſiege had been raiſed. His aſſiſtance being now unneceſſary, he returned with his army to reinforce general Gates, who had a ſhort time before taken the command of the American army in the north.

General Burgoyne having by unremitting induſtry collected about thirty days proviſions, and a bridge of boats being conſtructed in lieu of the bridge of rafts which had been carried away by inceſſant rains, the whole army croſſed Hudſon's River on the thirteenth and fourteenth of September, and encamped on the heights and plains of Saratoga, with a vaſt train of artillery. The movements of the army were of courſe regulated by the advances of the artillery, which were not only retarded by the deſtruction of the bridges, but by the rains, which had rendered the roads almoſt impaſſable. On the nineteenth of September the army advanced in front of the enemy at Still Water in the following order: The right wing was commanded by general Burgoyne, and covered by general Frazer and colonel Breyman, with the grenadiers and light-infantry, who were poſted along ſome high grounds on the right. The front and flanks were covered by Indians, Provincials, and Canadians. The left wing and artillery were commanded by majors-general Philips and Reideſel, who proceeded along the great road. The nature of the country preventing the enemy from beholding the different movements of the Britiſh army, they detached a body of five thouſand men to attempt turning the right wing, and attacking general Burgoyne in his rear. Being checked in their deſign by general Frazer, they made a rapid movement, which the peculiar ſituation of the country prevented from being diſcovered, and advanced to attack the Britiſh line on the right. The engagement began at three o'clock in the afternoon of the nineteenth of September, and continued till after ſun-ſet. The enemy were led to the battle by

Action at Still Water.

general Arnold, who diſtinguiſhed himſelf in an extraordinary manner. Unfortunately, the engagament was only partial on the part of the Engliſh. The chief burden of the battle of courſe lay on the regiments which were poſted in the plain. Theſe were the twentieth, the twenty-firſt, and the ſixty-ſecond. They behaved with great gallantry and firmneſs, receiving and returning the heavy fire of the enemy with equal coolneſs and intrepidity, for the ſpace of four hours. Several other regiments alſo diſtinguiſhed themſelves. The twenty-fourth regiment, with the grenadiers and light-infantry, were for ſome time engaged with great ſpirit and bravery. The German troops were not much in the battle, on account of their ſituation, which it was not judged adviſable to relinquiſh. As ſoon as the battle commenced, major-general Philips contrived to convey through a thick part of the wood ſome artillery, which was of eſſential ſervice.

The enemy, during the whole of the engagement, were ſupplied with freſh men by general Gates, who was poſted at a ſtar redoubt. As day-light cloſed they thought proper to retire, and leave the Britiſh maſters of the field of battle.

The loſs on each ſide was nearly equal; ſix hundred being killed and wounded on the part of the Britiſh, and the ſame number on the ſide of the Americans. It muſt be confeſſed that the engagement would have been more deciſive on the part of the Engliſh, if general Burgoyne had not burdened himſelf with ſuch a train of artillery as not only rendered his marching tardy, but made it neceſſary for him to extend his lines more than the nature of his ſituation rendered prudent. No ſolid advantages reſulted to the Britiſh troops from this encounter. The conduct of the enemy had fully convinced every one that they were able to ſuſtain an attack in open plains with the intrepidity, the ſpirit, and the coolneſs of veterans. For four hours they maintained a conteſt hand to hand;

and when they retired, it was not becauſe they were conquered, but becauſe the approach of night made a retreat to their camp abſolutely neceſſary.

The Britiſh army lay all night on their arms in the field of battle, and the next day works were erected within cannon-ſhot of the enemy, the right being fortified by ſtrong redoubts. It is ſaid that, had the lines of the enemy been attacked on the morning after the battle, they would have retreated, their baggage being loaded, and every thing prepared for flight, if the Britiſh general had thought proper to have adopted ſuch a meaſure. It muſt be confeſſed, however, that ſuch an aſſertion is not ſupported by circumſtances or probabilities; for the manner in which the enemy were poſted was peculiary ſtrong. On the right, any approach or attack was impracticable; and on the left not to be made without great hazard. The intrepidity of captain Jones, of the Britiſh artillery, who fell in this action, was particularly diſtinguiſhed. Few actions have been more remarkable than this, for both vigour of attack and obſtinacy of reſiſtance.

Diſtreſſed ſituation of general Burgoyne.

Every poſſible method was now taken to inform ſir William Howe and general Clinton of the ſituation of general Burgoyne, and arguments uſed that might induce them to make a diverſion in his favour. Under the conviction that they would adopt ſuch a mode of conduct, he had croſſed Hudſon's River, and given up all communication with the Lakes. He had expected that a diverſion would have been made before this period. Such a diverſion was indeed made about this time, and that without orders, by ſir Henry Clinton, againſt Forts Clinton and Montgomery in the lower parts of Hudſon's River.

After the battle of Still Water the ſavages, as already obſerved, had diſcovered a diſinclination to continue with general Burgoyne. They had been diſappointed in their hopes of plunder, and the check which the Engliſh had received at Bennington and Fort Stanwix had chilled that ardour and enthuſiaſm which they had at firſt manifeſted. The ſeaſon for hunting was now arrived; and never do they on any pretence forego it. On this account they withdrew their aſſiſtance, and deſerted general Burgoyne, deaf to every conſideration of honour, and unmoved by any repreſentations made to them of the diſtreſs in which their ſeceſſion would involve him. The royal army was by this deſertion extremely weakened; but the Britiſh general did not think it adviſable to retreat from the enemy.

Deſertion of the Indians.

Both armies lay in ſight of each other for ſome time, each fortifying their camp in the ſtrongeſt manner poſſible. This delay was extremely beneficial to the Americans, inaſmuch as it enabled them to increaſe their number of men, and to obtain a powerful reinforcement of ſtores and proviſions from the ſouthern provinces. But the American generals were not ſolely employed in fortifying their camp, or in increaſing their reſources. They knew the embarraſſment of general Burgoyne's ſituation, and the dilemma to which he was reduced. The only probable means of ſaving himſelf from deſtruction lay in a retreat. An expedition was therefore planned by generals Gates and Arnold, to prevent the adoption of this laſt ſad meaſure, by cutting off all communication with the Lakes, and by recovering the poſſeſſion of Ticonderoga and Mount Independence.

Retreat to Saratoga.

This expedition was entruſted to the command of colonel Brown, who with great ſecreſy and diligence gained the rear of the royal army undiſcovered. He arrived on the eighteenth of September at the north end of Lake George, where one ſmall ſloop and the boats employed in tranſporting proviſions to the army were ſurpriſed and taken, with a number of Canadians and a few ſeamen. Three companies of the fifty-third regiment were at the ſame time made priſoners. Immediately after they had ſecured the poſſeſſion of the armed veſſels, they began to attack Ticonderoga with two pieces of cannon, which they had obtained from the captured ſloop.

Brigadier-general Powel, who commanded the garriſon, defended it for four days againſt the attempts of the enemy, who, at the expiration of that period, were induced to retire, from an apprehenſion of being intercepted in their retreat by a detachment of troops from Canada. In their way back the enemy made another attempt upon Diamond Iſland, ſituated in the ſouthern part of the lake, which was as unſucceſsful as that made againſt Ticonderoga.

Royal army nearly ſurrounded.

General Burgoyne's difficulties began now to increaſe daily. The enemy had augmented their ſtrength in ſuch a manner as to render him diffident of the poſſibility of making good his retreat. His army was reduced to little more than five thouſand men, who were limited to half the uſual allowance of proviſions. The ſtock of forage was entirely exhauſted, and the horſes were periſhing in great numbers for the want of it. In addition to theſe circumſtances, no intelligence had yet been received of the approach of general Clinton, or of the diverſion which was to be made. Environed thus by difficulty and danger, general Burgoyne reſolved to try the diſpoſition of the enemy, to examine the poſſibility of advancing, and of diſlodging them from their poſts on the left, which would enable him to adopt the melancholy reſource of retreating to the lakes. Purſuant to this determination he detached a body of fifteen hundred men, which he headed himſelf, being attended by generals Philips, Reideſel, and Frazer. The camp was defended on the high grounds by generals Hamilton and Specht; and the redoubts and parts adjacent to the river, by brigadier Gell. This detachment had ſcarce formed, within leſs than half a mile of the enemy's intrenchments,

ments, when a furious attack was made on the left, where the grenadiers were poſted. Major Ackland, who commanded the grenadiers, conducted himſelf with great coolneſs and intrepidity. His poſt was extremely difficult and dangerous, and it was not poſſible to detach any aſſiſtance to him from the German corps, becauſe the ſuperiority in number of the enemy enabled them at the ſame time to extend their line of attack againſt them. The right had not yet been employed, but it being obſerved that the enemy were making a movement round their flank to prevent their retreat, the light-infantry and the twenty-fourth regiment inſtantly formed, in order to fruſtrate the enemy's intentions.

The left wing in the mean time, overpowered by numbers, was obliged to retreat, and would inevitably have been cut to pieces, but for the intervention of the light-infantry and twenty-fourth regiment. The whole detachment was now under the neceſſity of retiring, with the loſs of ſix pieces of artillery. Scarce had the Britiſh troops entered the lines when they were again impetuouſly attacked by the enemy, who, notwithſtanding a moſt heavy fire, began a furious aſſault upon their intrenchments. They were led by the gallant general Arnold, who attacked lord Balcarras's light-infantry with great eagerneſs. The reſiſtance was firm, and the engagement for a long while doubtful. A wound which Arnold received at length gave the victory to the Engliſh, and the Americans were repulſed from this quarter. In another, however, they were more ſucceſsful. The intrenchments defended by the German troops under colonel Breyman were carried ſword in hand. The colonel was killed, and his troops retreated, with the loſs of all their baggage, artillery, &c. Night cloſed the dreadful ſcene. The Engliſh loſt, this day, general Frazer, colonel Breyman, and ſeveral other officers of note, beſides a conſiderable number of wounded. The Americans took upwards of two hundred officers and

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privates priſoners; beſides nine pieces of braſs artillery, and the encampment of a German brigade, with all their equipage. But what was of the greateſt conſequence, they obtained from the ſpoils of the field a large ſupply of ammunition, under a ſcarcity of which they had long laboured.

General Burgoyne was now moſt critically ſituated. He could not continue in his preſent poſition without a certainty of deſtruction. He therefore reſolved to make a total and immediate change of poſition. With great ſecreſy and ſilence the whole army removed, with all their baggage and artillery, to the heights above the hoſpital during the night. This movement reduced the enemy to the neceſſity of making a new diſpoſition. On the ſucceeding day, the eighth of October, ſeveral attempts were made to induce the enemy to hazard a battle. They were however ineffectual, and the whole day was occupied in continued ſkirmiſhes.

The enemy had refuſed to hazard a battle becauſe they were preparing to carry meaſures into execution which would have immediately completed the ruin of the Britiſh army. Theſe were to turn general Burgoyne's right, which, if effected, would have incloſed him on all ſides. The Britiſh general, however, diſcovered theſe intentions before they were carried into execution. An inſtant retreat therefore to Saratoga was now the only alternative left. At nine o'clock on the evening of the eighth of October the army was ordered to relinquiſh their poſition on the heights above the hoſpital. The retreat to Saratoga was effected without loſs, and without any obſtruction on the part of the enemy; but it was impoſſible, encumbered as the army was with baggage and artillery, to carry off the ſick and wounded from the hoſpital. General Gates, however, behaved with his wonted humanity, and the unfortunate tenants of the hoſpital were treated with all imaginable tenderneſs. General Burgoyne having ordered the roads and the bridges to be broken in their march forward, the movement of the army in their retreat was neceſſarily tardy. The fords of Fiſh Kill Creek, which are ſomewhat to the northward of Saratoga, were not paſſed till ten o'clock on the ſucceeding morning. The enemy, watching every motion with the moſt anxious attention, had already arrived at this place before them; but on the approach of the Britiſh troops, they retired over the river Hudſon, to a larger force, which had been detached there to obſtruct the paſſage of the royal troops.

An attempt was now made to retreat to Fort George. A detachment of artificers under a ſtrong eſcort was accordingly diſpatched before the army, in order to repair the bridges and open the road to Fort Edward. The appearance of the enemy, however, prevented the artificers from effecting their purpoſe, and they were under the neceſſity of making a precipitate retreat on account of the deſertion of their eſcort. The enemy ſtretching along the farther ſhore of the river Hudſon, annoyed the batteaux of the royal army in ſuch a manner that they were forced to land the proviſions and convey them to the camp up a ſteep hill, the enemy pouring, during the whole time, a moſt tremendous fire on the men employed in this ſervice.

Surrounded in this manner by deſtruction and diſmay, general Burgoyne reſolved to attempt a retreat by night to Fort Edward, each ſoldier carrying his proviſion on his back. The artillery was to be left behind, on account of the impoſſibility, under the preſent circumſtance, of conveying it away. But even this ſad alternative was rendered impracticable. While the army were preparing to march, intelligence was received that the enemy had already poſſeſſed themſelves of the road to Fort Edward, and that they were well provided with artillery. In the courſe of the diſaſtrous events here enumerated, large quantities of baggage, proviſions, boats, and other articles, fell into the hands of the Americans; both regular troops, called continentals, and militia. The American militia were ſo eager after plunder, that they would often rob the provincial regulars of what booty they had ſecured, and ſell it on their own account. Irregularities of this kind were carried to ſuch a height, that the American commander, in general orders iſſued on the twelfth of October, declared "that he ſaw ſo many ſcandalous and mean tranſactions committed "by perſons who ſought more after plunder than the honour of "doing their duty, that it was his unalterable reſolution to have the "firſt perſon who ſhould thereafter be detected in pillaging the bag-"gage and ſtores taken from the enemy tried and puniſhed with the "utmoſt ſeverity."

The ſituation of general Burgoyne had now attainted the climax of difficulty and danger. Inceſſant toil had enervated the whole army. Out of eight thouſand men, of which the army conſiſted after the capture of Ticonderoga, not more than three thouſand five hundred fighting men remained, one half of which only were British. Proviſions were almoſt exhauſted, and no hope remained of procuring a freſh ſupply. Added to this, an enemy four times greater in point of number, and increaſing every day, almoſt encircled them. An engagement was ſtudiouſly avoided by the Americans, on account of their knowledge of the deſperate ſituation of the Britiſh troops; and the enemy were poſted in ſo advantageous a manner that they could not be attacked.

Every hope of relief being now at an end, on the thirteenth of October 1777, general Burgoyne ordered an exact ſtatement to be made of the ſtock of proviſions, which was found not to exceed ſeven or eight days ſubſiſtence for the troops.

The general inſtantly called a council of war, at which not only field officers but every captain was ordered to aſſiſt.

Convention with general Gates.

After ſome conſultation on the emergency of affairs, it was unanimouſly reſolved to enter into a convention with general Gates. The following were the ſteps preliminary to it;

No.

No. I.

October 13, 1777.

Lieutenant-general Burgoyne is deſirous of ſending a field-officer with a meſſage to major-general Gates, upon a matter of high moment to both armies. He requeſts to be informed at what hour general Gates will receive him to-morrow morning.

Major-general Gates.

Anſwer.

Major-general Gates will receive a field-officer from lieutenant-general Burgoyne at the advanced poſt of the army of the United States at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, from whence he will be conducted to head-quarters.

Camp at Saratoga, nine o'clock P. M. thirteenth October.

Lieutenant-general Burgoyne.

No. II.

Major Kingſton delivered the following meſſage to major-general Gates, October 14, 1777.

After having fought you twice, lieutenant-general Burgoyne has waited ſome days in his preſent poſition, determined to try a third conflict againſt any force you could bring againſt him. He is appriſed of the ſuperiority of your numbers, and the diſpoſition of your troops to impede his ſupplies, and render his retreat a ſcene of carnage on both ſides. In this ſituation he is impelled by humanity, and thinks himſelf juſtified by eſtabliſhed principles and precedents of ſtate and war, to ſpare the lives of brave men upon honourable terms. Should major-general Gates be inclined to treat upon that idea, general Burgoyne would propoſe a ceſſation of arms during the time neceſſary to communicate the preliminary terms, by which, in any extremity, he and his army mean to abide.

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No. III.

Major-general Gates's Propoſals, together with Lieutenant-general Burgoyne's Anſwers.

1. General Burgoyne's army being exceedingly reduced by repeated defeats, by deſertion, ſickneſs, &c. their proviſions exhauſted, their military horſes, tents, and baggage taken or deſtroyed, their retreat cut off, and their camp inveſted, they can only be allowed to ſurrender priſoners of war.

Anſ. Lieutenant-general Burgoyne's army, however reduced, will never admit that their retreat is cut off while they have arms in their hands.

2. The officers and ſoldiers may keep the baggage belonging to them. The generals of the United States never permit individuals to be pillaged.

3. The troops under his excellency general Burgoyne will be conducted by the moſt convenient route to New England, marching by eaſy marches, and ſufficiently provided for by the way.

Anſ. This article is anſwered by general Burgoyne's firſt propoſal, which is here annexed.

4. The officers will be admitted on parole; may wear their ſide arms, and will be treated with the liberality cuſtomary in Europe, ſo long as they, by proper behaviour, continue to deſerve it; but thoſe who are apprehended having broke their parole, as ſome Britiſh officers have done, muſt expect to be cloſe confined.

Anſ. There being no officer in this army under, or capable of being under the deſcription of breaking parole, this article needs no anſwer.

5. All public ſtores, artillery, arms, ammunition, carriages, horſes, &c. muſt be delivered to commiſſaries appointed to receive them.

Anſ. All public ſtores may be delivered, arms excepted.

6. Theſe terms being agreed to, and ſigned, the troops under his excellency general Burgoyne's command may be drawn up in their encampments, where they will be ordered to ground their arms, and may thereupon be marched to the river ſide to be paſſed over in their way towards Bennington.

Anſ. This article inadmiſſible in any extremity. Sooner than this army will conſent to ground their arms in their encampment, they will ruſh on the enemy, determined to take no quarter.

7. A ceſſation of arms to continue till ſun-ſet, to receive general Burgoyne's anſwer.

(Signed) HORATIO GATES.

Camp at Saratoga, October 14, 1777.

No. IV.

Lieutenant-general Burgoyne's Propoſals, together with Major-general Gates's Anſwers.

The annexed anſwers being given to major-general Gates's propoſals, it remains for lieutenant-general Burgoyne, and the army under his command, to ſtate the following preliminary articles on their part:

1. The troops to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments, which will be left as hereafter may be regulated.

1. The troops to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments to the verge of the river where the Old Ford ſtood, where their arms and artillery muſt be left.

2. A free paſſage to be granted to this army to Great Britain, upon condition of not ſerving again in North America during the

preſent conteſt, and a proper port to be aſſigned for the entry of tranſports to receive the troops wherever general Howe ſhall ſo order.

2. Agreed to, for the port of Boſton.

3. Should any cartel take place, by which this army, or any part of it, may be exchanged, the foregoing article to be void, as far as ſuch exchange ſhall be made.

3. Agreed.

4. All officers to retain their carriages, bat-horſes, and other cattle; and no baggage to be moleſted or ſearched, the lieutenant-general giving his honour that there are no public ſtores ſecreted therein. Major-general Gates will of courſe take the neceſſary meaſures for the ſecurity of this article.

4. Agreed.

5. Upon the march, the officers are not to be ſeparated from their men; and in quarters the officers ſhall be lodged according to rank, and are not to be hindered from aſſembling their men for roll-calling and other neceſſary purpoſes of regularity.

5. Agreed to, as far as circumſtances will admit.

6. There are various corps in this army compoſed of ſailors, batteau-men, artificers, drivers, independent companies, and followers of the army; and it is expected that thoſe perſons, of whatever country, ſhall be included in the fulleſt ſenſe and utmoſt extent of the above articles, and comprehended in every reſpect as Britiſh ſubjects.

6. Agreed to in the fulleſt extent.

7. All Canadians and perſons belonging to the eſtabliſhment in Canada to be permitted to return there.

7. Agreed.

8. Paſſports to be immediately granted for three officers, not exceeding the rank of captain, who ſhall be appointed by general Burgoyne to carry diſpatches to ſir W. Howe, ſir G. Carleton, and to Great Britain by the way of New York, and the public faith to be engaged that theſe diſpatches are not to be opened.

8. Agreed.

9. The foregoing articles are to be conſidered only as preliminary for framing a treaty, in the courſe of which others may ariſe to be conſidered by both parties; for which purpoſe it is propoſed that two officers of each army ſhall meet and report their deliberations to their reſpective generals.

9. This capitulation to be finiſhed by two o'clock this day, and the troops to march from their encampment at five, and be in readineſs to move towards Boſton to-morrow morning.

10. Lieutenant-general Burgoyne will ſend his deputy adjutant-general to receive major-general Gates's anſwer to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

10. Complied with.

(Signed) Horatio Gates.

Sarotoga, October 15, 1777.

On the following day the ſubſequent articles of convention between lieutenant-general Burgoyne and major-general Gates were ſettled.

1. The troops under lieutenant-general Burgoyne to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments to the verge of the river where the Old Ford ſtood, where the arms and artillery are to be left; the arms to be piled by word of command from their own officers.

2. A free paſſage to be granted the army under lieutenant-general Burgoyne to Great Britain, on condition of not ſerving again in North America during the preſent conteſt; and the port of Boſton is aſſigned for the entry of tranſports to receive the troops whenever general Howe ſhall ſo order.

3. Should any cartel take place by which the army under general Burgoyne, or any part of it, may be exchanged, the foregoing article to be void, as far as ſuch exchange ſhall be made.

4. The army under lieutenant-general Burgoyne to march to Maſſachuſet's Bay by the eaſieſt, moſt expeditious, and convenient route; and to be quartered in, near, or as convenient as poſſible to Boſton, that the march of the troops may not be delayed when tranſports arrive to receive them.

5. The troops to be ſupplied, on their march and during their being in quarters, with proviſions, by major-general Gates's orders, at the ſame rate of rations as the troops of his own army; and, if poſſible, the officers' horſes and cattle to be ſupplied with forage at the uſual rates.

6. All officers to retain their carriages, bat-horſes, and other cattle; and no baggage to be moleſted or ſearched, lieutenant-general Burgoyne giving his honour that there are no public ſtores ſecreted therein. Major-general Gates will of courſe take the neceſſary meaſures for a due performance of this article. Should any carriages be wanted during the march, for the tranſportation of officers baggage, they are, if poſſible, to be ſupplied by the country at the uſual rates.

7. Upon the march, and during the time the army ſhall remain in quarters in the Maſſachuſets Bay, the officers are not to be ſeparated from their men, as far as circumſtances will admit. The officers are to be quartered according to their rank, and are not to

be hindered from aſſembling their men for roll-callings, and other neceſſary purpoſes of regularity.

8. All corps whatever of general Burgoyne's army, whether compoſed of ſailors, batteau-men, artificers, drivers, independent companies and followers of the army, of whatever country, ſhall be included in the fulleſt ſenſe and utmoſt extent of the above articles, and comprehended in every reſpect as Britiſh ſubjects.

9. All Canadians and perſons belonging to the Canadian eſtabliſhment, conſiſting of ſailors, batteau-men, &c. are to be permitted to return there; they are to be conducted immediately by the ſhorteſt route, to the firſt Britiſh port on Lake George, are to be ſupplied with proviſions in the ſame manner as the other troops, and are to be bound by the ſame condition of not ſerving during the preſent conteſt in North America.

10. Paſſports to be immediately granted for three officers, not exceeding the rank of captains, who ſhall be appointed by lieutenant-general Burgoyne to carry diſpaches to ſir William Howe, ſir Guy Carleton, and to Great Britain by the way of New York; and major-general Gates engages the public faith that theſe diſpatches are not to be opened. Theſe officers are to ſet out immediately, after receiving their diſpatches, and are to travel the ſhorteſt route, and in the moſt expeditious manner.

11. During the ſtay of the troops in the Maſſachuſets Bay, the officers are to be admitted on parole, and are to be permitted to wear their ſide-arms.

12. Should the army under lieutenant-general Burgoyne find it neceſſary to ſend for their clothing, and other baggage from Canada, they are to be permitted to do it in the moſt expeditious manner, and the neceſſary paſſports granted for that purpoſe.

13. Theſe articles are to be mutually ſigned and exchanged to-morrow morning at nine o'clock; and the troops under lieutenant-general Burgoyne are to march out of their intrenchments at three o'clock in the afternoon.

HORATIO GATES, Major-general.

Camp at Saratoga, Oct. 16, 1777.

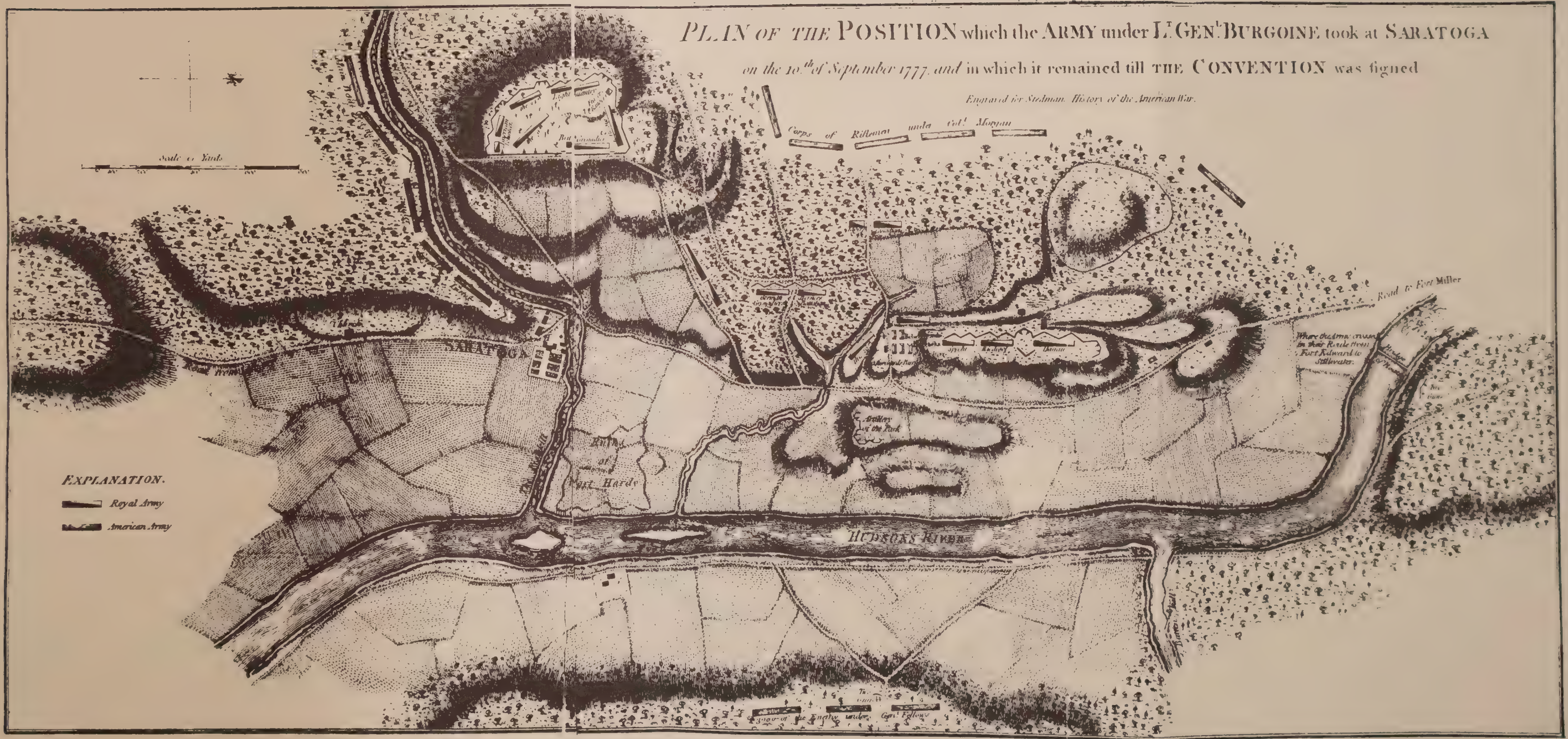
To prevent any doubts that might ariſe from lieutenant-general Burgoyne's name not being mentioned in the above treaty, major-general Gates hereby declares that he is underſtood to be comprehended in it as fully as if his name had been ſpecifically mentioned.

HORATIO GATES.

General Gates's conduct in this melancholy event was peculiarly generous and humane. It is ſaid that when the Britiſh troops piled their arms he would not ſuffer his own men to be witneſs to the ſad ſpectacle.

The number of men who ſurrendered, amounted, including Canadians and Provincials, to near ſix thouſand. The ſick and wounded in the hoſpitals amounted to ſix hundred; and it was computed that the loſs in killed, taken, and deſerted, ſubſequent to the capture of Ticonderoga, was near three thouſand men. The artillery taken, conſiſted of thirty-five pieces of different dimenſions.

Such was the melancholy event of a campaign from which the moſt important benefits were predicted. The tardineſs of movement, however, occaſioned by the large and ſuperfluous train of artillery which general Burgoyne carried with him, certainly contributed not a little to produce thoſe diſaſters and diſtreſſes which at length overwhelmed him. But tracing the failure of his expedition further back, it will be found to have been occaſioned alſo by other cauſes, which, though



PLAN OF THE POSITION which the ARMY under L^t. GEN^l. BURGOINE took at SARATOGA on the 10.^th of September 1777, and in which it remained till THE CONVENTION was ſigned

Engraved for Stedman, History of the American War.

Scale of Yards
Light Infantry
Brit. Grenadiers
Corps of Riflemen under Col.^l Morgan
SARATOGA
Hills at Fort Hardy
Artillery of the Park
Hudsons River
Road to Fort Miller
Where the Army crossed in their Route from Fort Edward to Stillwater
Bridge
Corps of the Enemy under Gen.^l Fellows
EXPLANATION.
Royal Army
American Army

Published by the Author April 12^th 1793

though when conſidered ſingly, may be deemed only remote, yet, condenſed into one general proſpect, they will be found to have immediately produced that fatal conſummation which has already been recorded.

During the winter of 1776 no ſteps whatever were taken in Canada to provide horſes, carts, or forage, for the expedition that was to take place in the enſuing year: It was not till the tenth of June 1777 that any contract was made for thoſe articles. This tardineſs of conduct delayed the movement of the army for three weeks, and rendered every ſubſequent operation equally ſlow; for the carriages for the tranſport ſervice being conſtructed in haſte, and of freſh unſeaſoned wood, were inſufficient for the purpoſes for which they were deſigned, and were almoſt all deſtroyed on the road to Fort Edward. This circumſtance detained the army ſo long at Fort Edward, that it ultimately occaſioned the unfortunate, ill-conducted expedition to Bennington. The defeat of colonels Baum, Breyman, and St. Leger, enervated the Britiſh cauſe in an extraordinary degree. There were ſeveral of the inhabitants who were not attached to either party by principle, and who had reſolved to join themſelves to that which ſhould be ſucceſsful. Thoſe men, after the diſaſters at Bennington and Fort Stanwix, added a ſudden and powerful increaſe of ſtrength to the Americans.

General Burgoyne, it was generally thought, after his diſappointment, and the defeat at Bennington, ought not by any means to have croſſed the Hudſon. Any attempt to proceed to Albany was then improper. The diſtance from Fort Edward was ſixty-four miles; the road was difficult and dangerous, being commanded by high and ſtrong grounds, where an active enemy, well acquainted with the country, had many advantages, even with an inferior force. General Burgoyne ſhould have poſted himſelf, it was ſaid, on the heights of Fort Edward; which would have ſecured a communication

CHAP. XVII. 1777.

munication with Canada, and enabled him to advance or to retreat according to contingent circumſtances. He was cenſured alſo for remaining ſo long at Skeneſborough, and conſuming eighteen days in making roads through moraſſes and ſwamps. Had he returned to Ticonderoga, and croſſed Lake St. George, he would have reached Fort Edward at leaſt ten or twelve days ſooner. He ſhould have detached general Frazer from Skeneſborough to Fort George; by which means a quantity of proviſions and ſtores, deſtined by the Americans for Ticonderoga, would have been ſecured, as well as a ſupply of carts, waggons, and draft bullocks. This conduct would have enabled him to have penetrated to Albany before the enemy were ſufficiently powerful to oppoſe him. Another cauſe of the failure of the expedition was the want of a ſyſtem of co-operation between general Burgoyne and general Carleton, and the neglect of ſir William Howe to take any ſteps to facilitate the operations of the northern army. When general Burgoyne found himſelf under the neceſſity of relinquiſhing the communication with Canada, he wrote to general Carleton, requeſting, in the moſt preſſing terms, that he would ſend a regiment to garriſon Ticonderoga, that he might take the regiment then on duty there with him, and thereby endeavour ſtill to preſerve a communication with Canada. This favour, however, was poſitively refuſed. General Burgoyne was alſo diſappointed in not receiving an increaſe of ſtrength by the junction of a body of loyaliſts on his advancing beyond Ticonderoga. Offended with general Carleton for refuſing to inveſt Ticonderoga in the preceding year, they reſolved to remain inactive, and to afford no aſſiſtance to the Britiſh army. But indeed the grand cauſe was the appointment of general Burgoyne in preference to general Carleton. Of the former, it muſt be allowed that he poſſeſſed courage, a tolerable degree of military knowledge, with much addreſs. The latter had many of theſe qualities, with the addition of a knowledge of the country, its reſources, and its local ſtrength and weakneſs. He was likewiſe well acquainted with the temper and diſpoſition of the inhabitants.

The unfortunate Burgoyne, reduced from the lofty language of his proclamation to the ſtyle of defence and recrimination, endeavoured to lay the blame of his miſcarriages upon ſir William Howe, for not having ſent a force for co-operation up the North River to Albany; on lord George Germaine, the Britiſh ſecretary of ſtate, for having tied up his hands by orders poſitive and unqualified, in inſtances where latitude ſhould be given to a general to act according to circumſtances; and on the ſlowneſs with which the Germans had marched to Bennington, the centre and ſource of his misfortunes. But it was urged, in anſwer to all the general's excuſes, that the force put into his hands for the intended march through Canada, was nearly, if not fully, equal to what he himſelf had demanded: That he ought not, on any doubtful proſpect of a co-operating army from New York, to have given up his communication with the Lakes; and that his conduct, in ſending ſo ſmall a detachment to Bennington, and this conſiſting of foreigners, and of all foreigners the ſloweſt in their motions, was an abſurdity bordering on infatuation.

It was alſo contended, on the iſſue of Burgoyne's unfortunate expedition, that he had carried along with him a quantity of artillery totally incompatible with that celerity of movement on which his ſucceſs entirely depended. If a juncture afterwards aroſe which ſeemed to demand this formidable apparatus, it was the very movement of that apparatus that created the neceſſity of employing it. The army was confined in its operations to the motions of the artillery; and the enormous delays, occaſioned in a great degree by the

1777.

the ſlowneſs of its progreſs, gave time to the provincials to recover from their panic, and again to collect that army which had been completely diſperſed. Whereas, had he advanced rapidly, without incumbrance or delay, he would neither have found men to oppoſe nor works to interrupt his progreſs through the country. But not only had general Burgoyne embarraſſed himſelf with every incumbrance that could retard the progreſs of an army; he had adopted a route calculated to add to every delay, and to augment every difficulty. Inſtead of the direct and common road to Hudſon's River, by the way of Lake George, he had thought proper, at the expence of much time and labour, to cut a road through an extent of country the moſt difficult and impracticable. If general Gates himſelf, it was ſaid, had directed his operations, he could not have planned meaſures more conducive to the completion of his own views. The flight from Ticonderoga had made ſuch an impreſſion on the ſpirits of the Americans, that it was impoſſible immediately to collect an army, or to inſpire them with that confidence which is neceſſary to enſure ſucceſs; but in time that impreſſion would wear off, unleſs it ſhould be continued or renewed by the rapid movements of the king's troops. When, inſtead of ſuch movements, they ſaw thoſe troops waſting days, weeks, and months, without making the ſmalleſt progreſs, it is no wonder that they recovered their ſpirits, and aſſembled in much greater force than ever. In the whole of general Burgoyne's vindication, it was obſerved, his method was to ſtate a neceſſity for every one of his meaſures taken ſingly, and not as links of one chain or ſyſtem of action, taking care to paſs over one material circumſtance, that *that neceſſity* invariably originated, on his own part, from ſome previous omiſſion or blunder. The deportment of this commander, after the ſurrender of his army, was as pitiful as his conduct before that melancholy event was weak and unfortunate. He refuſed, having been ſet at liberty on his parole, to join his captive army, threw himſelf, like other unſucceſsful commanders, into the hands of oppoſition, railed at his majeſty's miniſters, introduced himſelf on every occaſion in the debates in parliament, demanding a public trial, complaining, even while a priſoner to the enemy, that he was denied acceſs to the king, and that his merit and ſufferings were equally unnoticed.

CHAP. XVIII.

Expedition up the North River under Sir Henry Clinton—Reduction of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton.—Burning of Æſopus.

CHAP. XVIII.

1777. Expedition up the North River under ſir Henry Clinton.

A BODY of recruits arrived from Europe at New York about the cloſe of September 1777. This reinforcement enabled ſir Henry Clinton to undertake an expedition which he could not before have attempted, without leaving the defences of New York too feebly guarded. It may here be obſerved, that the ſituation of New York, commanded in a variety of points, which were thence of neceſſity to be occupied by the Britiſh, had a very unfavourable influence on the conduct of the war; for the protection of that great depoſitary of our ſtores required ſo conſiderable a number of men as moſt materially cramped exertion in the field. The object of ſir Henry Clinton's expedition was to take poſſeſſion of the forts which forbad the paſſage of our veſſels up to Albany; and the ulterior view in the meaſure was not ſo much to create a diverſion in favour of general Burgoyne (the neceſſity of which was not ſuſpected), as to open a communication which might have been important when that commander ſhould have fixed himſelf at Albany. The enterpriſe was entirely ſpontaneous on the part of ſir Henry Clinton, and was conducted with more energy than moſt of the military operations that took place in America. A force amounting nearly to three thouſand men was embarked on board craft of different kinds, convoyed by ſome ſhips of war under the command of commodore Hotham. This armament proceeded up the Hudſon to Verplank's Point, on the eaſt ſhore of that river (forty miles from New York), which ſtation of the enemy lord Rawdon had ſome time before been diſpatched to reconnoitre in a frigate. The landing-places being defended only by ſlight breaſtworks with two twelve-pounders, and the corps ſtationed there being fearful that their retreat might be cut off at the neck of the peninſula, the debarkation was made with little or no reſiſtance, and the firſt troops who landed, purſuing rapidly the flying enemy, obliged them to abandon one of the twelve-pounders. Sir Henry Clinton paſſed the night upon this peninſula. This feint had the effect which it was hoped it might produce; for it inſpired general Putnam, who commanded in that diſtrict, with the opinion that ſir Henry Clinton meant to puſh through the eaſtern highlands, in order to co-operate with Burgoyne. Putnam, under this perſuaſion, haſtened with two thouſand men, principally drawn from the forts, to occupy the paſſes on the eaſtern ſhore. On the ſixth of October at day-break, two thouſand one hundred men, without any artillery, were tranſported to Stoney Point, on the weſtern bank of the river; the remainder of the troops being left to ſecure Verplanks. The only road from Stoney Point to the forts (at leaſt the only one without a prodigious circuit) was a path acroſs the Donderberg, a very ſteep mountain, which with its precipices overhangs the North River. As the path would not admit above three men to march abreaſt, and by its windings would have expoſed the troops, during their paſſage, to be deſtroyed at the pleaſure of any force ſtationed at the top of the hill, the moſt trifling guard would have been ſufficient to have rendered the attempt of the Britiſh abortive. The very difficulties however of the attempt ſecured the paſſage to ſir Henry Clinton; this having induced the Americans to ſuppoſe that it was ſuperfluous to watch it; and a ſmall advanced guard, ſent forward to explore if the paſs was undefended, having made a ſignal that the coaſt was clear, the main body of the Britiſh aſcended the hill with all poſſible expedition. Having reſted a while, they traverſed the ſummit, and deſcended on the oppoſite ſide, at the bottom of which they ſtumbled upon a detachment ſent too tardily for the defence of the paſs. The diſperſion of this ſmall corps deſtroyed the hope that the forts might be ſurpriſed; but the enterpriſe was not thence proſecuted with leſs reſolution. The diſtance from Stoney Point to the fort is twelve miles; but the nature of the country rendered the march ſo ſlow and fatiguing, that it wanted but about an hour of ſunſet when the Britiſh arrived within a mile of their deſtination. They ſeparated into two columns: The one, conſiſting of nine hundred men, under lieutenant-colonel Campbell of the fifty-ſecond regiment, was deſtined for the attack of Fort Montgomery; whilſt the remainder, under the immediate command of ſir Henry Clinton, were to ſtorm the ſtronger poſt of Fort Clinton. The two forts were only divided by a creek called Poplop's Kill, which empties itſelf into the Hudſon's River, communicating by a wooden bridge of conſiderable length acroſs that ſtream. The aſſault was made upon both forts at the ſame inſtant. The point aſſailed at Fort Montgomery, was not very ſtrong, either from ſituation or works, nor did the enemy make a very obſtinate reſiſtance; ſo that the fort was carried by our troops with little loſs, excepting that the death of ſo valuable an officer as lieutenant-colonel Campbell muſt be conſidered as material in the balance againſt the ſucceſs. Almoſt all the garriſon, conſiſting of eight hundred men, made their eſcape.

Reduction of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton.

Againſt Fort Clinton the enterpriſe was more ſerious; the fort was built upon a rocky elevation, the only approach to which, for the Britiſh troops, was over a ſpecies of paſs of about four hundred yards ſquare, between a lake and a precipice which overhung the Hudſon's River. This ſpot was covered with felled trees, ſo that the approach of the aſſailants could not be conducted with rapidity or with much regularity, and ten pieces of artillery bore upon that narrow paſs, whilſt the Britiſh had not a ſingle cannon to cover their aſſault. Their only chance conſiſted in preſſing forward with as much velocity as the ground would admit; and the troops were ſtrictly ordered upon no account to fire. The flank companies of the ſeventh and twenty-ſixth regiments, with a company of Anſpach grenadiers, led the attack upon one point, whilſt the ſixty-third regiment endeavoured to penetrate at another.

In no inſtance during the American war was more invincible reſolution exhibited than in this attack. The Britiſh and foreign troops preſſed forward ſilently, under a dreadful fire, and arriving at the foot of the work, actually puſhed one another up into the embraſures. The garriſon, conſiſting of four hundred men, for a little while longer conteſted the rampart. Some of our men were killed in the very embraſures, and ſeveral were wounded with bayonets in the ſtruggle; ſo that it muſt be admitted the Americans defended themſelves courageouſly. At length the rampart was cleared. The Americans retiring to the other ſide of the eſplanade, diſcharged a laſt volley, and threw down their arms. Notwithſtanding this provocation, there was not a ſingle man of the enemy put to death, except ſuch as fell in the actual ſtruggle upon the rampart. This fact we mention, not only as diſplaying a moſt generous moderation on the part of the victors, contrary to what uſually happens in ſuch aſſaults, but as refuting an impudent aſſertion advanced in ſome of the French accounts, that the whole garriſon had been put to death by their conquerors. We are happy in reſcuing from the ſhade which the magnitude of general Burgoyne's misfortune at the time threw over it, an enterpriſe equally worthy of atten-

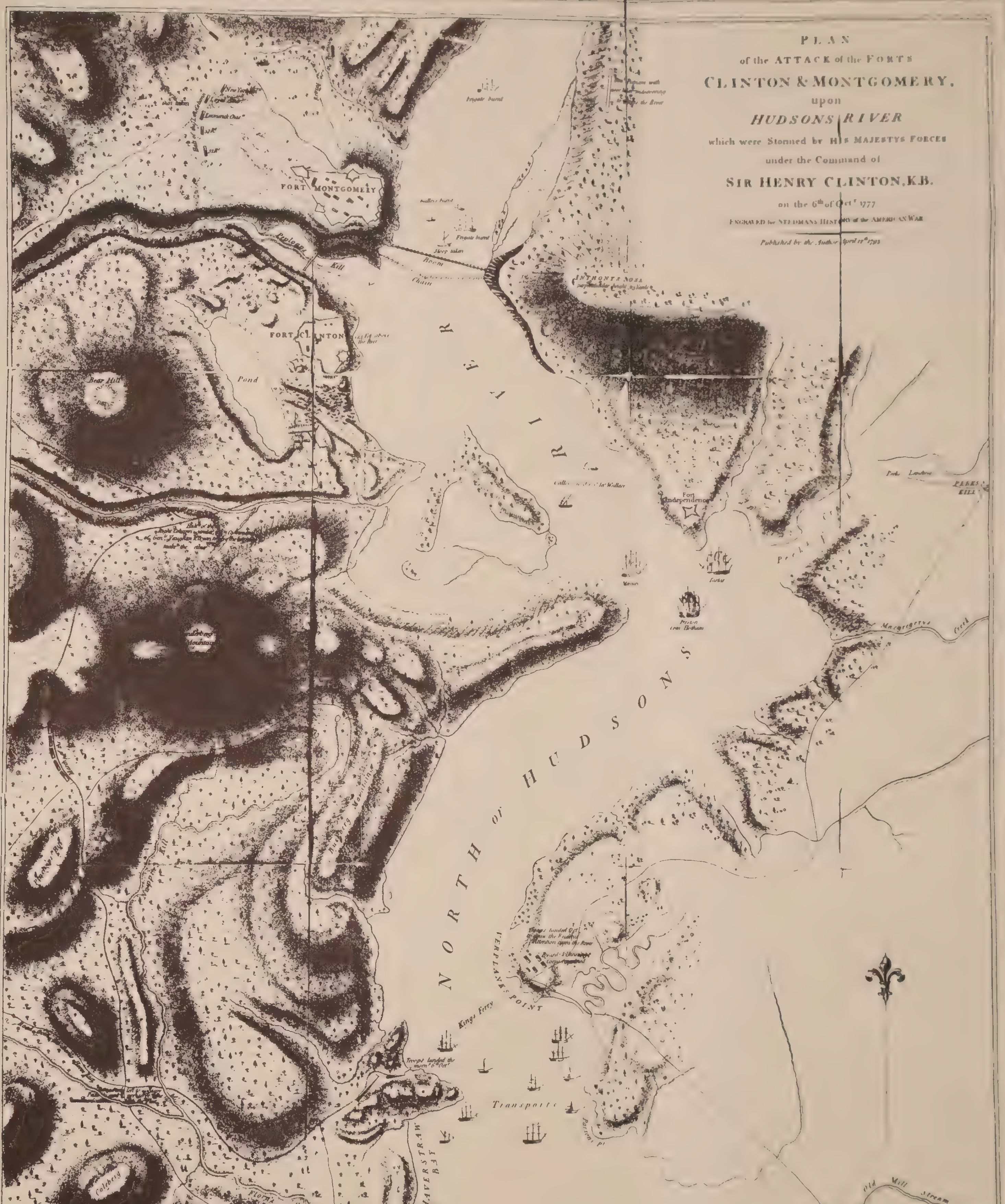
1777.

tion for its boldneſs and the degree of injury that it did to the enemy.

The loſs on the part of the aſſailants was not ſo ſevere as might have been expected, for it amounted to only one hundred and forty killed and wounded. About three hundred of the Americans were killed, wounded, and taken priſoners.

The ſmall loſs of the Britiſh is only to be accounted for by the duſk, and by the American artillery being ſerved with more attention to quickneſs in firing than accuracy in pointing. Captain Stewart, who commanded the grenadiers, and major Sill, who led the ſixty-third regiment, were killed upon the ſpot, both pierced with many wounds. Count Graboufky, a Poliſh nobleman, who had croſſed the Atlantic on purpoſe to make a campaign as a volunteer with the Britiſh, likewiſe fell on this occaſion. But his death was attended with a little circumſtance which ought to be mentioned in honour to his memory. He had advanced to the ſtorm in company with lord Rawdon amongſt the grenadiers, but was ſeparated from him amongſt the felled trees, which forced every man to find a path for himſelf. Arriving at the foot of the work he fell, after having received three balls: When giving his ſword to a grenadier, he conjured him, with his expiring voice, to deliver it to lord Rawdon, and to aſſure his lordſhip that he died in a manner becoming one who had ſhared the dangers of ſuch gallant troops.

It is not amiſs here to correct an error which has crept into former accounts, from an expreſſion uſed by ſir Henry Clinton, with a view of doing juſtice to the zeal of the ſquadron under commodore Hotham. In the Annual Regiſter it is mentioned as one of the circumſtances which ſhook the courage of the Americans, and ſlackened their reſiſtance, that the Britiſh gallies advanced ſo near as to ſtrike the walls of the fort with their



PLAN
of the ATTACK of the FORTS
CLINTON & MONTGOMERY,
upon
HUDSONS RIVER
which were Stormed by HIS MAJESTYS FORCES
under the Command of
SIR HENRY CLINTON, K.B.
on the 6th of Octr 1777
ENGRAVED for STEDMANS HISTORY of the AMERICAN WAR
Published by the Author April 12th 1793

FORT MONTGOMERY
FORT CLINTON
Bear Hill
Pond
Poplopen Kill
Boom
Chain
Frigate burnt
Sloop taken
ANTHONYS NOSE
Fort Independence
Peeks Landing
PEEKS KILL
Margregorys Creek
Preston
Tartar
NORTH or HUDSONS RIVER
VERPLANKS POINT
Kings Ferry
Troops landed the morn. 6th Octr
Transports
HAVERSTRAW BAY
Old Mill stream
SCALE of MILES

oars. The fort being on a precipice at leaſt one hundred and twenty feet above the level of the river, this repreſentation muſt appear abſurd. Sir Henry Clinton, in his letter on the ſubject, mentions the appearance of the gallies, which was not effected without infinite exertion, to a diſtance whence they thought they might, by their fire, in ſome degree diſtract the attention of the garriſon; and ſir Henry Clinton, doing juſtice to this purpoſed diverſion, meant to expreſs that ſeveral of the balls had actually reached the fort.

High praiſe is due to commodore, now admiral, Hotham, for his arrangements and efforts upon this expedition; and the officers ſerving under him nobly imitated his example.

Night came on immediately after the Britiſh had completed their conqueſt; but its obſcurity was not of long continuance. Two frigates, two gallies, and an armed ſloop belonging to the enemy, lay at anchor in the river under the guns of the forts. Theſe veſſels were ſecured from our ſquadron by a defence which ſtrongly marked the indefatigable induſtry of the Americans. A boom, conſiſting of vaſt rafts of timber connected by cables, ſtretched acroſs the Hudſon's River (in that part ſix hundred yards wide) from the projecting point on which Fort Montgomery ſtands to a mountain, called St. Anthony's Noſe, that riſes immediately from the other margin of the ſtream. This boom was ſtrengthened by a chain, which alone was ſuppoſed to have coſt the Americans about fifty thouſand pounds. The chain weighed above fifty tons, and the links were about two inches and a half ſquare. Behind this bulwark the American veſſels bid defiance to any attempt by water; but it was clear that as ſoon as daylight returned they muſt be deſtroyed by the cannon of the forts, unleſs they ſurrendered themſelves to the victors. To avoid this fate they ſilently ſlipped their cables, and ſetting all their ſails attempted to get up the river. The wind happened to be ſo adverſe, that it was ſoon found impracticable to complete their eſcape; upon which the crews quitted the veſſels in their boats, previouſly ſetting fire to the frigates and gallies. The flames ſuddenly broke forth; and, as every ſail was ſet, the veſſels ſoon became magnificent pyramids of fire. The reflection on the ſteep face of the oppoſite mountain, and the long train of ruddy light that ſhone upon the water for a prodigious diſtance, had a wonderful effect; whilſt the ear was awfully filled with the continued echoes from the rocky ſhores, as the flames gradually reached the cannon. The whole was ſublimely terminated by the exploſions, which again left all to darkneſs.

No ſooner was the reduction of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton known, than Fort Conſtitution, on a rock ſome miles higher up the river, was demoliſhed without the orders of the governor, and without a removal of the artillery and ſtores*.

Not far from the forts, thus reduced or demoliſhed, lay a new ſettlement called the Continental Village, which contained barracks for fifteen hundred men. Theſe, beſides ſeveral ſtore-houſes and loaded waggons, of the articles contained in which no account could be taken, were deſtroyed by a detachment under major-general Tryon.

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* Return of Cannon, Stores, Ammunition, &c. taken and deſtroyed upon the Expedition up the North River, October 6, 1777.

Cannon.—Thirty-two pounders 6; eighteen pounders 3; twelve pounders 7; nine pounders 3; ſix pounders 41; four pounders 3; three pounders 2; two pounders 2. Total 67.

Two frigates built for 30 and 36 guns were burnt by the Americans on the forts being taken. The guns aboard them, and two gallies which were likewiſe burnt, amounted to above 30. One ſloop with 10 guns fell into our hands. The whole loſs therefore is above 100 pieces.

Powder.—54 caſks; 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ barrels; 12,236 lb. excluſive of what was aboard the veſſels.

Cartridges fitted.—1852 cannon; 57,396 muſquet.

Cannon ſhot.—9530 round; 886 double headed; 2483 grape and caſe; 36 cwt. 1 qr. 15lb. langridge.

For muſquets.—1279 wt. of ball; 116 wt. of buck-ſhot; 5400 flints.

Every article belonging to the laboratory in the greateſt perfection. Other ſtores, ſuch as port-fires, match, harneſs, ſpare gun carriages, tools, inſtruments, &c. &c. in great plenty.

A ſervice was now completed, which, it was imagined, might open eſſential communication with general Burgoyne; of whoſe diſtreſs the moſt remote ſuſpicion was not then entertained.

Whilſt the fleet was on its paſſage from New York to the forts, an officer from general Burgoyne, who had made his way through the country in diſguiſe, reached ſir Henry Clinton; but the object of his miſſion was only to ſolicit the facilitation of general Burgoyne's progreſs by ſome ſuch expedition as that in which the officer found ſir Henry Clinton engaged.

The day after the capture of the forts another officer from the northern army reached ſir Henry Clinton, and his repreſentation alſo amounted only to this point, That if general Burgoyne did not hear of co-operation by the tenth of October, he ſhould, on that day, be conſtrained, by the terror of wanting proviſions, to return to Fort Edward. The ignorance of the difficulties which at that time ſurrounded general Burgoyne's army is the leſs to be lamented, as it does not appear that it would have been practicable for ſir Henry Clinton to have taken any ſteps which could at all have ſuccoured that army. October.

A flying ſquadron under ſir James Wallace was now ſent up the river, deſtroying a number of veſſels as they ſailed along. Under cover of this naval force, general Vaughan, on the thirteenth of October, with a detachment from the little army under ſir Henry Clinton, landed at Æſopus Creek, where he found two batteries; one of two, another of three guns; and an armed galley at the mouth of the Creek. The Americans made little reſiſtance; but, abandoning the batteries and row-galley, took to flight.

1777. Æſopus burnt.

From this place the general continued his march about five miles farther to the town of Æſopus; which, having been fired at by ſome people as he entered it, he reduced to aſhes with a vaſt collection of ſtores and proviſions. A few of the townſmen, and ſome of the country people, aſſembled; but, after making ſome ſhew of oppoſition, drew back.

Sir James Wallace at the ſame time deſtroyed the ſhipping and ſmall craft that had taken ſhelter in the creek which leads up to the town. Our troops, having performed theſe ſervices, re-embarked for New-York.

CHAP. XIX.

Expedition under the Command of Lieutenant-colonel Mawhood—Action at Quintin's Bridge—At Hancock's Bridge—Ingenious Stratagem of an Americau Loyaliſt—Colonel Abercrombie's Expedition againſt the Americans under Lacey near Crooked Billet—Colonel Maitland's Expedition up the Delaware—Attempt on La Fayette. —1778.

CHAP. XIX. 1778.

WHILE the Britiſh army lay in winter-quarters at Philadelphia, the efforts made for their own conveniency, and for annoying the enemy, were as follow :—

Expedition under colonel Mawhood.

In the beginning of March, lieutenant-colonel Mawhood, with a detachment from the main army, conſiſting of the twenty-ſeventh and forty-ſixth regiments, and New Jerſey volunteers, made a deſcent on the coaſt of Jerſey, near Salem, for the purpoſe of procuring forage, of which the army ſtood in great need, and of opening a communication with the loyaliſts of that part of the country, groaning under the tyranny of Livingſton the governor. Colonel Mawhood carried with him ſpare arms to put into the hands of ſuch as choſe to repair to his ſtandard. This detachment embarked on board tranſports on the twelfth of March, fell down the Delaware, and landed ſafely at the place of their deſtination.

Colonel Mawhood, being reinforced on the ſeventeenth by the queen's rangers, conſiſting of about two hundred and ſeventy infantry, rank and file, and thirty cavalry, gave directions for the forage to take place on the eighteenth, accompanied by the ſtricteſt charge againſt plunder.

The town of Salem, near to which, as has juſt been obſerved, our detachment landed, lies upon a creek of that name, falling into the Delaware nearly oppoſite to Reedy Iſland. The Alewas Creek runs almoſt parallel to that of Salem, and falls into the Delaware to the ſouth of it. Over the Alewas Creek three bridges were extended: Hancock's Bridge the lower; Quintin's that in the centre; and Thompſon's the fartheſt up. Between theſe Creeks, then, on the Delaware, forming a peninſula, at its greateſt ſeven, and at its leaſt four miles in width, the foraging was to commence. The provincial militia was poſted at Hancock's and Quintin's Bridge, which they had defended by breaſtworks. Colonel Mawhood made detachments to maſk theſe bridges, and foraged in their rear.

Action at Quintin's Bridge.

The officer who commanded the detachment at Quintin's having ſent information that the enemy were aſſembled in great numbers at the bridge, and would probably paſs over it whenever he ſhould quit it, in which caſe his party would be in great danger, colonel Mawhood marched with the queen's rangers to his aſſiſtance, and by a ſucceſsful feint and ambuſcade, firſt drew a diviſion of the enemy over the bridge, and then vigorouſly attacked them. Not a few of them were taken priſoners, but the greater part were drowned in the Alewas Creek. Among the priſoners was their commanding officer, who proved to be a Frenchman. The rangers had one huſſar mortally wounded. Here we ſhall give place to an anecdote, authenticated by the authority of colonel Simcoe, who commanded the rangers, that affords a ſpecimen of that baſe and ungenerous ſpirit with which many individuals in the American armies ſhewed themſelues in the courſe of the war to be actuated. The huſſar was wounded by a man whom, in the eagerneſs of the purſuit, he had paſſed, and given quarters to him without diſarming him. The villain was killed by another huſſar.

The Americans, who had for a moment quitted the bridge, but who, when they perceived that colonel Mawhood did not think it to his purpoſe to paſs it, returned, ſtill occupied the poſts at Quintin's and Hancock's Bridge, their numbers gradually increaſing. Colonel Mawhood determined to attack them at Hancock's Bridge, where, from all reports, they were aſſembled to the number of four hundred men. This enterpriſe was entruſted to major Simcoe, who embarked with the rangers on board flat-bottomed boats on the twentieth at night. He was to be landed at an inlet ſeven miles below Alewas Creek, when the boats were to be immediately returned; and by a private road he was to reach Hancock's Bridge, oppoſite to which major Mitchell was to co-operate with him, at the head of the twenty-ſeventh regiment. Major Simcoe, though the enemy were nearly double his numbers, and his retreat was cut off by the abſolute orders to ſend back the boats, conſidered that every thing depended on ſurpriſe, and repoſed juſt confidence in the ſilence, attention, and ſpirit of the corps under his command. By an overſight in the naval department, when the boats arrived off Alewas Creek, the tide ſet ſo ſtrong againſt them, that, in the opinion of the officer of the navy, they could not reach the place of their deſtination till mid-day. Major Simcoe determined, however, not to return, but to land at the mouth of the Alewas Creek on the marſhes. They ſoon found out a landing-place, and, after a march of two miles through marſhes up to the knees in mud and water, at length arrived at a wood upon dry land, where the major formed his men for the attack. There was no public road that led to Hancock's Bridge but that of which the rangers were now in poſſeſſion; but a bank or dyke, on which there was a footway, led from Hancock's to Quintin's Bridge. This dyke captain Saunders, with a party, was ſent to ambuſcade, and to take up a ſmall bridge that was

At Hancock's Bridge.

upon

CHAP. XIX. 1778.

upon it, as the enemy would probably flee that way, and if not purſued too cloſely, would thus be the more eaſily defeated.

There was at Hancock's Bridge a large brick dwelling-houſe, called Hancock's Houſe, around which were many ſtone houſes, and ſome few cottages. Captain Dunlop was detached to the rear of Hancock's Houſe, in which it was preſumed the American officers were quartered, and directed to force, occupy, and barricade it, as it commanded the paſſage of the bridge. Different detachments were allotted to the ſmall houſes in the rear of Hancock's, ſuppoſed to be the enemy's quarters. Having maſtered theſe, they were ordered to aſſemble at Hancock's, which the light-infantry who were in reſerve reached by the road, and forced the front door at the ſame time that captain Dunlop, by a more difficult way, entered the back door. As it was very dark, theſe companies were on the point of falling on one another. The ſurpriſe was complete, which it would have been, even if the whole of the enemy's force had been preſent; but, fortunately for them, they had quitted it the evening before, leaving a detachment of twenty or thirty men, all of whom were killed.

The roads that led to the country were immediately ambuſcaded, and lieutenant Whitlock was detached to ſurpriſe a patrole of ſeven men who had been ſent down the Creek, which he completely effected. On their refuſal to ſurrender he was obliged to fire on them, when only one made his eſcape. It was the firing on this ſmall party that communicated to the twenty-ſeventh regiment the ſucceſs of the enterpriſe: Two days after, the queen's rangers patrolled Thomſon's Bridge. The enemy, who had been poſted there, were alarmed at the approach of a cow the night before, fired at it, and then fled. They alſo abandoned Quintin's Bridge, and retired to a creek, ſixteen miles from Alewas Creek.

Major Simcoe continued to drive the ſmall parties of the enemy before him, wherever he went for the protection of the foragers: And even the main force of the enemy, in thoſe parts, aſſembled at Cohanſey, might have been eaſily ſurpriſed; but colonel Mawhood judged, that, having completed his forage with perfect ſucceſs, his buſineſs was to return to head-quarters, which he did accordingly. The troops reimbarked on board the boats, and returned, without any accident, to Philadelphia.

Though patroles were made now as regularly as ever, as ſpring approached the enemy's cavalry came nearer to our lines, and owed their eſcape more than once to the fleetneſs of their horſes. Some of theſe that fell into the hands of our parties were decorated with eggs, women's ſhoes, and other articles, of which they had plundered the country-people coming to and returning from market; and thus accoutred, were paraded through the ſtreets to priſon. A number of loyaliſts in arms under the command of Mr. Thomas, their captain, with Hoveden's and James's troops of provincials, made excurſions into the country, and carried off from the Americans, proviſions, clothing, and other articles of uſe to the Britiſh army and their adherents. On ſuch excurſions they were uſually ſupported, and their return to their friends ſecured, by the queen's rangers.

Ingenious ſtratagem of an American loyaliſt.

A ſtratagem for procuring proviſions for our army at Philadelphia, equally pleaſant and ſucceſsful, was played off by one of the loyaliſts againſt the Americans. General Waſhington drew his ſupplies of fat cattle from New England. A drove of this kind was met about thirty miles from Philadelphia, between the Delaware and Schuylkill, by a friend of government, who paſſed himſelf upon the drivers for one of general Waſhington's commiſſaries, billeted them at a neighbouring farm, and then immediately galloped to Philadelphia, from whence a party of dragoons were ſent for the cattle, and the whole drove was ſafely conducted to Philadelphia.

Colonel Abercrombie's expedition againſt the Americans under general Lacy near Crooked Billet.

About the beginning of May, a great part of an American brigade, not leſs than one thouſand men, commanded by brigadier Lacy, general of the Penſylvania militia, took poſt at a place called the Crooked Billet, about ſeventeen miles from Philadelphia, on one of the great roads of communication between that town and the country. From this ſtation the Americans, in ſmall parties, overawed and impeded the country-people in their approaches with proviſions to the Philadelphia market. By the way of Crooked Billet lay the main road between Philadelphia and New York; and, at leſs than half a mile from it, on the Philadelphia ſide, there was another road which led, by the way of Horſham Meeting, to general Waſhington's camp. Major Simcoe, who had been the firſt that gave intelligence to the commander in chief of the ſituation, ſtrength, and probable views of brigadier-general Lacy, propoſed that he ſhould march with the rangers, and, by a circuit, get to the road in the rear of the Crooked Billet; and that a detachment ſhould march, and ambuſcade themſelves in a wood (for according to his intelligence there was one adapted to the purpoſe) on the road which led to Waſhington's camp, by the Horſham meeting-houſe. This party was to remain in ambuſcade till they ſhould hear the firing of the queen's rangers. It was preſumed that, if the ſurpriſe ſhould not be complete, the ambuſcade would enſure ſucceſs, by ſupporting the rangers if they ſhould be checked, and by intercepting the enemy if they ſhould attempt to retreat, as they probably would, and that towards their main army. This plan being adopted, lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie, on the night preceding the fourth of May, was detached to the place of ambuſcade, with about four hundred light-infantry, a large party of light dragoons, and horſes to mount part of his infantry for the greater expedition.

Major Simcoe's march was difficult, as he judged it neceſſary to make many circuits, in order to avoid places where the enemy had poſts or patroles. He was well guided; and fortunately had information about twilight that prevented him from committing a diſaſtrous error. The armed refugees under their leader captain Thomas, had been ſent by Mr. Galloway to eſcort ſome of his furniture into Philadelphia. Hearing by ſome means or other of the preſent expedition; they were encouraged to ſeize the opportunity which it afforded of effecting their object with the greater certainty and ſafety. They marched up the roads which the rangers had ſo carefully avoided, but without meeting with any interruption or alarm. They fortunately paſſed a houſe at which major Simcoe called; otherwiſe he would certainly, when he overtook them, have miſtaken them for the enemy. This little adventure of the refugees, with the narrow eſcape they made from a fatal onſet by their own friends, ſerves, among many other inſtances with which the hiſtory of war is replete, to ſhew the neceſſity of different military operations going on at the ſame time, being concerted and carried on under the direction of one mind. The refugees were directed to keep themſelves undiſcovered, and the rangers marched on as faſt as poſſible. Although daylight appeared, major Simcoe was under no apprehenſions of diſcovery, nor yet of colonel Abercrombie's having met with any accident, as the parties were within hearing of each other's fire, and none was heard. He was therefore, as he had now quitted the road, in order to make his laſt circuit to reach the Billet, informing his officers of his plan of attack, when all of a ſudden a ſlight firing was heard.

Colonel Abercrombie, although aſſiſted by horſes, could not arrive at his poſt at the appointed time, before day-break. But, being anxious to ſupport major Simcoe, he detached to the place of ambuſcade his cavalry and mounted light-infantry. The officer who commanded this detached party patrolled as far as Lacy's out-poſt, and being fired at by the centinels did not retire. Lacy, rightly judging troops been too much fatigued by the very great length of the march, which favoured the enemy in their flight, and had our cavalry puſhed on when they firſt diſcovered the American centinels.

Expedition up the Delaware under major Maitland.

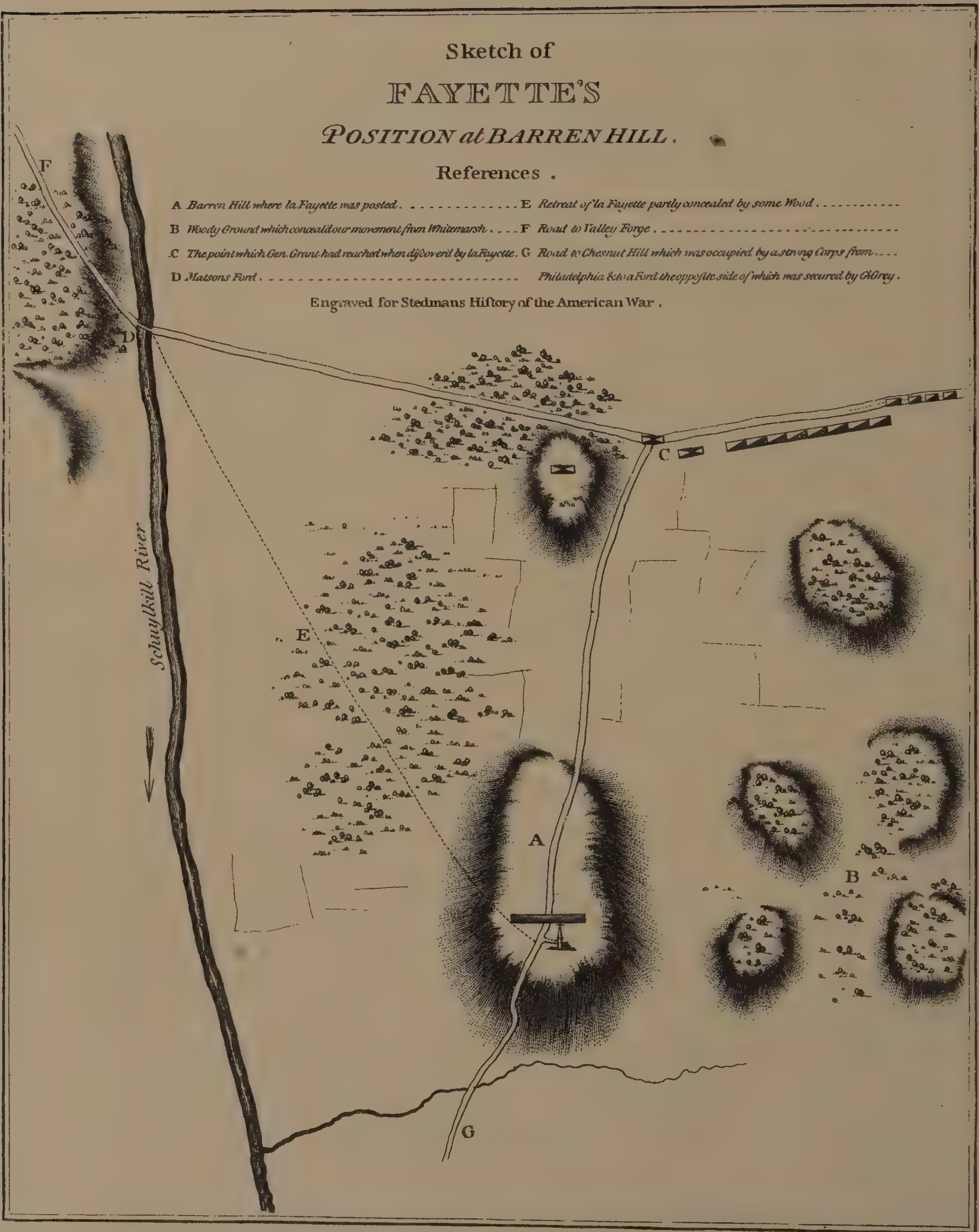
A joint attempt was made on the ſeventh of May by ſea and land to deſtroy the gallies and other veſſels that had eſcaped up the Delaware after the reduction of Mud Iſland, and the ſhipping that the enemy had in the river between Philadelphia and Trenton. This enterpriſe was effectually accompliſhed by the ſkill and activity of captain Henry of the navy, and major Maitland of the marines. A conſiderable quantity of ſtores and proviſions was alſo deſtroyed; and a number of the enemy, who made no great oppoſition, were killed. Not fewer than forty-four American veſſels were burnt, ſome of them of conſiderable value.

Attempt on La Fayette.

About the nineteenth of May 1778, General Waſhington detached the marquis de la Fayette to take poſt with nearly three thouſand men upon Barren Hill, a poſition ſeven miles advanced from the camp of Valley Forge; but upon the oppoſite or eaſtern ſide of the river.

The object of this ſtep is not very clear. The poſition was ſtill too diſtant from Philadelphia to give any interruption of conſequence to ſuch ſupplies as were carried into that city by the neighbouring country. Poſſibly, as the intended evacuation of Philadelphia was now well known, general Waſhington might have thought that it would keep up the ſpirits of his party if he ſeemed to preſs upon the Britiſh in their retreat; for he muſt have been aware that his then force could not allow him to expect that he ſhould make any real advantage of ſuch an attempt: And the diſtance of Barren Hill from Philadelphia appeared to ſecure the detachment from any hazard. This ſuppoſed ſecurity proved illuſive. On the night of May the twentieth, five thouſand of the choiceſt troops in the Britiſh army ſet out from Philadelphia, marching by the road which keeps cloſe

to



Sketch of FAYETTE'S *POSITION at BARREN HILL.*

References.

A *Barren Hill where la Fayette was posted.*

B *Woody Ground which conceal'd our movement from Whitemarsh.*

C *The point which Gen. Grant had reached when diſcover'd by la Fayette.*

D *Matsons Ford.*

E *Retreat of la Fayette partly concealed by some Wood.*

F *Road to Valley Forge.*

G *Road to Chesnut Hill which was occupied by a strong Corps from Philadelphia & to a Ford the oppoſite side of which was secured by Col. Grey.*

Engraved for Stedmans Hiſtory of the American War.

to the Delaware, and which, therefore, diverges from the direction of Barren Hill. After the detachment had proceeded ſome miles, it turned to the left, and paſſing White Marſh ſoon after day-break, it reached at length its deſtined point, without having fallen in with any patrole or out-poſt of the enemy. This point was directly in the rear of La Fayette's poſition, conſequently was between him and the camp of general Waſhington. The road here forked; one branch led to the camp of La Fayette, at the diſtance of a ſhort mile; the other went to Matſon's Ford acroſs the Schuylkill, at about the ſame diſtance. In the courſe of the night a ſtrong detachment, under the command of general Grey, had marched from Philadelphia along the weſtern branch of the Schuylkill, and ſtationed themſelves at a ford two or three miles in front of La Fayette's right flank, whilſt the remainder of the Britiſh army advanced to Cheſnut Hill.

The retreat of La Fayette was thus cut off from every paſſage but Matſon's Ford; and as the line from La Fayette's poſition formed the baſe of an obtuſe-angled triangle with the two roads above mentioned, it was obvious that his diſtance from it was much greater than that of the Britiſh. When general Grant arrived at the point above deſcribed, the confuſed galloping of ſome of the enemy's horſemen, who advanced to reconnoitre, intimated that the approach of the Britiſh was then firſt perceived. At the ſame time the column was diſcovered by glaſſes from the camp of general Waſhington, who, by the firing of cannon, attempted to give his detachment notice of the danger. Conſiderable time ſeems to have been loſt in making a diſpoſition for the intended attack, during which delay a corps of cavalry, that had formed the advanced guard on the march, took poſſeſſion of a hill between the two roads. From this elevation the corps of La Fayette was diſcovered retreating towards Matſon's Ford through the low woody grounds which border the river. The diſorder and precipitation, apparent in the rear of that column, ſufficiently

1778.

ficiently indicated the terror with which they were attempting their eſcape. Information of this circumſtance is ſaid to have been given to general Grant, and his ſuperior proximity to Matſon's Ford is reported to have been urged to him, and even pointed out in the ſtrongeſt manner; but under the perſuaſion that this was only a part of La Fayette's troops, detached for ſome unaccountable reaſon, the general perſiſted in his reſolution of advancing to Barren Hill, notwithſtanding the ſtrong remonſtrances of Sir William Erſkine againſt that meaſure. This poſt was unluckily concealed from view by intervening trees, otherwiſe the deſertion of it by the enemy would have been perceived. The Britiſh having advanced to the church, and found the camp abandoned, undertook the purſuit of the enemy by the very track which La Fayette had taken. In the mean time that officer had reached the Ford; but his troops, being overcome with apprehenſion, had hurried acroſs the river, leaving behind them the ſix field-pieces which they had brought from camp to the bank of the river. La Fayette having formed his battalions on the other ſide, and perceiving that the Britiſh did not approach by the road in which he apprehended them, ſent a corps acroſs for his cannon, ordering ſome ſmall parties to be advanced into the woods to retard the progreſs of the Britiſh advanced guard, ſhould it approach whilſt the artillery was in the river. The cannon were dragged over, but before the parties of obſervation could retire, the Britiſh cavalry fell upon them, and killed or took about forty. The Britiſh generals advancing to the Ford, perceived that La Fayette was ſo advantageouſly poſted on the other ſide of the river, with his artillery on the high and broken grounds which aroſe from the water's edge, that nothing further could be attempted againſt him. Thus unfortunately failed the object of the expedition. It is ſaid general Waſhington thought the caſe ſo hopeleſs, that he broke his bridge from Valley Forge acroſs the Schuylkill, leſt the ſucceſs ſhould be purſued againſt himſelf. It is obvious that he could not attempt to ſuccour La Fayette; becauſe, as he had but four thouſand men remaining in his camp, the Britiſh detachment was of itſelf equal to give him battlé, could he poſſibly have joined La Fayette; and that was a ſtake which every intereſt forbade. But as the body of the Britiſh army was at Cheſnut Hill, at hand to give general Grant immediate ſupport, general Waſhington could not have interfered without every probability of incurring ruin.

As the time approached when the army was to move from Philadelphia, American patroles were paſſed over the Delaware from the Jerſeys. One of theſe, after a long chaſe, was taken by the huſſars belonging to the queen's rangers. The quarter-maſter-general, ſir William Erſkine, being in great want of horſes, commiſſaries were ſent to procure them, eſcorted by the rangers under major Simcoe. The major entered on this office with much regret, as the horſes were to be taken from people whom he had hitherto uniformly protected.

CHAP. XX.

Sir William Howe reſigns the Command of the Army—Feſtival called Miſchianza, in honour of Sir William Howe—He is ſucceeded in the Command of the Army by Sir Henry Clinton—Returns to England—Complains of Defamation, and ſolicits and obtains a Parliamentary Inquiry into his Conduct.—1778.

CHAP. XX. 1778.

THESE, then, with occaſional parties ſent out to cover the loyaliſts, were the only movements made by the Britiſh commander in chief while he lay in his winter-quarters, from October 1777 to June 1778, at Philadelphia.

It would ſeem, however, that ſir William Howe imagined that all that could be done for the royal cauſe had been now performed: For to a deputy ſent to the commander in chief from the magiſtrates, on a rumour of the intended evacuation of Philadelphia, requeſting his advice how to act, he ſaid that the beſt thing they could do would be to go over and make their peace with general Waſhington. And as he himſelf was on the eve of quitting the army, he told them to go to ſir Henry Clinton, his deſtined ſucceſſor, for a flag of truce in order to go out to Waſhington for that purpoſe. The deputy accordingly went to ſir Henry Clinton, who ſaid that he could not grant a flag on ſuch an occaſion; that the game was not up; that the war was not over, but would ſtill be vigorouſly carried on; and that they ought not by any means to entertain a thought of going over to the enemy.

1778. Sir William Howe reſigns the command of the army.

Sir William Howe had formed the reſolution of reſigning his office ſo early as the month of October. In a letter of his of the twenty-eighth of that month, he wrote to the ſecretary of ſtate for the American department, lord George Germaine, as follows:——"From the little attention, my lord, given to my recommendations ſince the commencement of my command, I am led to hope that I may be relieved from this very painful ſervice, wherein I have not the good fortune to enjoy the neceſſary confidence and ſupport of my ſuperiors, but which I conclude will be extended to ſir Henry Clinton, my preſumptive ſucceſſor. By the return of the packet I humbly requeſt I may have his majeſty's permiſſion to reſign." That permiſſion he received on the fourteenth of April 1778; but in the ſame letter which conveyed leave to reſign, he was ordered by his majeſty, while he ſhould continue in command, to lay hold of every opportunity of putting an end to the war, by a due exertion of the force under his orders.

The commander in chief's letter, in which he alleges, as the ground of his reſignation, the want of neceſſary confidence and ſupport on the part of adminiſtration, was matter of equal aſtoniſhment and indignation to the parties againſt whom that charge was made; while it inevitably led the unprejudiced and impartial ſpectator to contraſt the languor and reluctance too viſibly apparent in the whole conduct of ſir William Howe with that alacrity and zeal with which the miniſtry, and particularly the miniſter for American affairs, provided and furniſhed the means of carrying on the war, and that diſpoſition which they manifeſted to invite and reward the efforts of the general by all poſſible encouragement. When meaſures for reducing the revolted colonies were reſolved on, and ſir William Howe was appointed to the command of the army, ſuch was the diſpoſition of government to gratify him in whatever he ſhould deſire, that the ſecretary for the American department declared, "the meaſures of force ſhould be the wiſhes of the general." The general, who was then in America, and had the ſtate of the war under his eye, was the beſt judge of what force would be competent to its ſuppreſſion. On his judgment, therefore, government relied; but inſtead of ſtinting, they ſurpaſſed his wiſhes. In his letter to lord Germaine [*], after long and mature deliberation, he only requires nineteen thouſand men; which, he ſays, will be "adequate to an active offenſive campaign on the ſide of New "York and Rhode Iſland." Inſtead of nineteen thouſand men, he was furniſhed with thirty-one thouſand four hundred and ſeventy-ſix. And, although he expected to meet a force of thirty thouſand men, the whole American army did not amount to eighteen thouſand. With the force now ſent, amounting to eleven thouſand men more than he required, the general appeared to be more than ſatisfied, and declared his utter aſtoniſhment at the uncommon exertions of government. He acknowledged, in his letter to government [†], that the ſucceſſes of the army under his command had intimidated the leaders of rebellion, and nearly induced a general ſubmiſſion;—an admiſſion which was ſtrictly juſt; for farther oppoſition was univerſally deſpaired of by all America, except a few deſperate men in general Waſhington's army; and that army was reduced to a number not exceeding four thouſand men. And yet, at that period, we find him making a demand, firſt of fifteen thouſand, and then of twenty thouſand rank and file. The general, it is true, did not make this extravagant demand without aſſigning reaſons for it; but theſe reaſons were ill-founded. In his letter of the twelfth of February 1778 he informed the ſecretary of ſtate that "the rebels had proſpects of bringing into the field more than "fifty thouſand men. They are moſt ſanguine in their expecta-"tions," ſays he, "and conſcious that their whole ſtake depends upon "the ſucceſs of the next campaign, uſe every compulſory means to "thoſe who do not enter voluntarily into their ſervice." We know however, that, inſtead of fifty thouſand men, they were not able to bring into the field, when the general met their force at Hillſborough, more than eight thouſand men; and even at the Brandywine, not more than ſixteen thouſand, militia included, after he had, contrarily to all policy, given them two months, by every poſſible exertion, to recruit their feeble army. It thus appears, that if the reinforcement required on this occaſion fell ſhort of that which was demanded by the general, the expected reinforcement of the Americans, which was the reaſon aſſigned for that requiſition, failed in a much greater proportion. More than one half of the force required was ſent, and not more than one fifth of that of the Americans was raiſed. The account of the armed force in 1777 ſtood thus: Britiſh, forty thouſand eight hundred and ſeventy-four, veteran troops. American regular army at Hillſborough, eight thouſand; at Brandywine, eleven thouſand; and, in the ſpring, at Valley Forge, not four thouſand undiſciplined troops. With what juſtice, then, it was ſaid, could the general complain of his want of force? and how extravagant his attempt to throw the blame of his own miſconduct on that adminiſtration which had, by ſuch uncommon exertions, thus gratified him in all his wiſhes. The longer contemplation was indulged on this ſubject, the more were the minds of men inflamed with warm emotions.

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[*] Of the 26th of November 1775.

[†] Of the 30th of November 1776, and the 20th of January 1777.

" While the friends of the coloniſts," it was ſaid, " were bringing " their plot to maturity in Britain; while the natural reſources of " this country were cried down, to the great encouragement of our " foreign enemies, and a national deſpondency was generally effected; while the opponents of adminiſtration were adviſing and contending in both houſes of parliament for withdrawing the troops " from America, and, at the ſame time, oppoſing every meaſure " which was neceſſary for the recovery of the revolted colonies, " the ſlowneſs and procraſtination of the general accorded but too " well with thoſe ſentiments, and contributed not a little to render " adminiſtration more and more odious to the people, whoſe diſguſt and indignation roſe in proportion as the miniſter demanded more and more ſupplies, and as the general neglected " to improve the great opportunities, that were at different times " preſented, of putting an end to the war."

The violence of oppoſition on the one part, and the extreme tenderneſs of ſir William Howe towards the Americans on the other, ſeemed to many obſervers to be linked together by a kind of connection ſomewhat ſimilar to that between cauſe and effect. He certainly ſuffered the enemy, with leſs than four thouſand men, to re-conquer a province which he had lately reduced, and to lay a kind of ſiege to his army in his winter-quarters. He unfortunately waſted the ſeaſon of military operation, giving them time to recruit their reduced force. Though the ſpirit of revolt was occaſionally depreſſed by the valour of our troops, it was uniformly revived by the miſconduct of the general.

Such were the obſervations that were very generally made on the conduct of ſir William Howe, when he not only reſigned his office without attaining, in any degree, the end for which he took it upon him, but endeavoured to ſhift his want of ſucceſs from his own ſhoulders upon that of the ſecretary of ſtate for the American department.

Feſtival called Miſchianza in honour of ſir William Howe.

The ſame or ſimilar obſervations were made, and re-echoed with ſtill greater energy over all the Britiſh empire, on another unfortunate occaſion, which, like the grounds alleged for the reſignation of his office, induced and provoked men to compare the importance of his ſervices with the merit he aſſumed, and the gravity with which he ſuſtained the moſt exceſſive praiſe and adulation. It is to the famous Miſchianza that we allude, or feſtival given in honour of ſir William Howe, by ſome of the Britiſh officers at Philadelphia, when he was about to give up his command, and to return to England. This entertainment not only far exceeded any thing that had ever been ſeen in America, but rivalled the magnificent exhibitions of that vain-glorious monarch and conqueror, Louis XIV. of France. All the colours of the army were placed in a grand avenue three hundred feet in length, lined with the king's troops, between two triumphal arches, for the two brothers, the admiral, lord Howe, and the general, ſir William Howe, to march along in pompous proceſſion, followed by a numerous train of attendants, with ſeven ſilken knights of the blended roſe, and ſeven more of the burning mountain, and fourteen damſels dreſſed in the Turkiſh faſhion, to an area of one hundred and fifty yards ſquare, lined alſo with the king's troops, for the exhibition of a tilt and tournament, or mock fight of old chivalry, in honour of thoſe two heroes. On the top of each triumphal arch, was a figure of Fame, beſpangled with ſtars, blowing from her trumpet in letters of light, *Tes lauriers ſont immortels* *.

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* Thy laurels are immortal.

This romantic triumph, after ſo many diſgraces and diſappointments, did not eſcape the ſevereſt ſatire, both in private converſation and in printed papers; among which a letter addreſſed to ſir William Howe in a publication called The American Criſis, by Paine, the author of the pamphlet ſtyled *Common Senſe*, was moſt diſtinguiſhed for ſhrewdneſs of remark, vigour of conception, and energy of expreſſion.

We ſhall here inſert a very excellent letter, which corroborates many of the facts ſtated by us, written in 1777, by M. Du Portail, miniſter at war in France to the conſtituent aſſembly in 1791 and 1792, but at the period of the letter being wrote, a colonel in the French ſervice, and acting as a brigadier-general in the American army †.

Sir

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† (COPIE.)

A Monſeigneur le Comte de St. Germain, Miniſtre de la Guerre (pour vous ſeulement, Monſeigneur.)

Du Camp de White Marſh, à quartre lieues de Philadelphie,
le 12me Novembre 1777.

MONSEIGNEUR,

J'AI eu l'honneur de vous rendre conte des battailles de Brandywine et de German Town, et de vous en envoyer les plans; ainſi que celui de Philadelphie, avec ſes environs, à cinq lieues, à la ronde; afin que vous puiſſiez juger de la ſituation du général Howe. J'eſpere que tout cela vous ſera parvenu. Juſqu' à préſent le général Howe n'eſt pas encore maître des deux petits forts, qui ſont dans la riviere, et qui empêchent ſes vaiſſeaux de remonter juſqu' à la ville; ce qui le réduit à ne communiquer avec eux que par le petit chemin que j'ai marqué ſur la carte; chemin que nous pouvons bien lui couper cet hiver, quand nous aurons reçu un renfort des troupes victorieuſes du nord. Nous comptons auſſi mettre un corps de deux ou trois mille hommes de l'autre côté de la Schaylkill. Il y à déja des troupes dans le Jerſeys; de cette façon le général Howe ſera bloqué dans Philadelphie, et en danger de mourir de faim; à moins qu'il ne ſe rembarque; mais pour dire la vérité, nous ne l'eſperons pas. Il prendra probablement les forts, s'il les attaque bien; et il aura alors une communication ſure avec ſes vaiſſeaux, quoiqu' il en ſoit, Monſeigneur, vous voyez que pour des gens battus deux fois,

nous

Sir William Howe, ſoon after receiving the ſplendid teſtimony of eſteem which has been juſt deſcribed, ſet ſail for England, leaving the

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nous ne ſommes pas en trop mauvaiſe poſture. Nous devons cela à ce que les Anglois n'ont que très peu de cavalerie ; de ſorte qu'ils ne peuvent pourſuivre leur victoire. Nous le devons encore plus à nos bois, et aux obſtacles de toute eſpéce d'ont le pays eſt défendu. Maintenant d'après l'expérience de cette campagne, il eſt naturel, de ſe faire cette queſtion : Les Americains réuſſiront-ils à ſe rendre libres, ou non? En France, où l'on ne peut juger que par les faits, on jugera pour l' affirmative. Nous, qui avons vu comment les choſes ſe ſont paſſées, ne penſerons pas de même. A parler franchement, ce n'eſt pas par la bonne conduite des Americains, que la campagne en général s'eſt terminée aſſez heureuſement ; mais par la faute des Anglois. Ce fut une faute capitale du gouvernement Britannique, de vouloir que le général Burgoyne traverſat plus de deux cens lieues de pays, et preſque déſert, pour ſe joindre aux generaux Howe et Clinton. Ce plan pouvoit paroître grand dans le cabinet de Londres; mais miſérable aux yeux de ceux qui avoient une exacte connoiſſance de la nature du pays. Mon obſervation n'eſt pas en conſéquence de l' événement ; car vous vous rappelerez peut-être, Monſeigneur, que j'ai eu l' honneur de vous écrire, il y a deux mois que j' étois bien aiſe que les Anglois, ne nous oppoſaſſent ici que dix mille hommes, & que j'eſpérois beaucoup que la jonction des généraux Burgoyne et Howe n'auroit lieu que quand la campagne ne ſeroit plus tenable ; et que même ſon armée ſeroit détruite de la moitié, par la faim, la fatigue, la déſertion, et les pertes qu'ils eſſuyeroient tous les jours par nos troupes, et nos milices poſtées dans les bois. L'iſſue à ſurpaſſé mon attente. Si les Anglois, au lieu de s' amuſer avoient dirigé leur attaque contre le général Waſhington, avec dix-huit ou vingt mille hommes, je ne ſais pas trop ce que nous ſerions devenus ; parceque ſi nous avions doublé le nombre de nos troupes, nous n'aurions pas doublé nos forces ; mais triplé nos embarras.

Si nous jettons les yeux ſur le plan de campagne, en examinant la conduite du général Howe ; nous verrons qu'il n'a pas même fait, tout ce qu'il étoit en ſon pouvoir de faire : Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le mander après la battaille de Brandywine. Car s'il eut profité de ſes avantages, il ne ſeroit plus queſtion de l'armée du général Waſhington ; et il a mis depuis dans toutes ſes opérations une lenteur et une timidité, qui m'ont toujours étonné. Mais il peut ſe raviſer, & l' on peut envoyer un autre général de Londres ; alors nous ne pourrions peut-être pas ſi bien nous tirer d'affaire. Aureſte puiſque les événements qui dépendent de l'habilité des généraux ne peuvent ſe prévoir ; ils ne doivent pas entrer dans les conjectures qu' on peut faire à l' avenir. Faiſons ſeulement attention au nombre de troupes ; et j'oſerai dire que ſi les Anglois pouvoient avoir ici trente mille hommes ; ils pourroient réduire le pays. Une ſeconde cauſe qui pourroit hâter cette réduction, et même l'opérer ſeule, c'eſt le manque de munition de guerre, et des choſes néceſſaries à la vie. A l' égard des choſes néceſſaries pour la continuation de la guerre, il leur manque preſque tout. Il n'ont ni drap, ni linge, ni ſel, ni

the command of the army to ſir Henry Clinton, of whoſe actions in the courſe of the preſent war we have already made mention; but

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ni eau de vie, ni ſucre; et ces derniers articles ſont plus importans qu'on ne le croiroit d'abord. Avant la guerre, les peuples Américains ſans vivre dans le luxe, jouiſſoient de tout ce qui eſt néceſſaire pour rendre la vie agréable et heureuſe. Ils paſſoient une grande partie de leur tems à fumer et à boire du thé, ou des liqueurs ſpiritueuſes. Telles étoient les habitudes de ces peuples. Il ne ſeroit donc pas ſurprenant que le changement d' une vie efféminée, transformée ſubitement en celle de geurrier, qui eſt dure et penible, leur fit préférer le joug des Anglois, à une liberté achetée aux dépens des douceurs de la vie. Ce que je vous dis ne peut que vous ſurprendre, Monſeigneur, mais tel eſt ce peuple, qui, mou, ſans énergie, ſans vigueur, ſans paſſion pour la cauſe dans laquelle il s'eſt engagé ne la ſoutient que parcequ'il ſuit l' impulſion qu'on lui a premierement donnée. Il y a cent fois plus d'enthouſiaſme pour cette revolution dans quelque caffé de Paris que ce ſoit qu'il n'y en a dans les Provinces Unies enſemble. Il eſt donc néceſſaire, pour achever cette revolution, que la France fourniſſe à ce peuple tout ce qui lui eſt néceſſaire; afin qu'il trouve la guerre moins dure à ſoutenir. Il eſt vrai qu'il lui encoutera quelques millions; mais ils ſeront bien employés en anéantiſſant le pouvoir de l'Angleterre qui dépouillée de ſes colonies, ſans marine, et ſans commerce, perdra ſa grandeur, et laiſſera la France ſans rivale. Cependant quelques perſonnes penſent (entr' autres l' Abbé Réynal) qu'il ne ſeroit pas de l'intérêt de la France donner la liberté aux colonies Angloiſes, et qu'elle riſqueroit de perdre les ſiennes. Mais pour ceux qui connoiſſent ce-pays-ci, il eſt evident, qu'il ſe paſſera bien des années avant qu'ils puiſſent être en état de mettre une flotte en mer, pour faire des conquêtes. La jalouſie entre les provinces (dont on voit déja le germe) les aura diviſés en tant de différens intérêts, qu'aucune d'elles ne ſera à craindre.

On pouroit demander, ſi pour opérer plutôt la révolution en Amerique, il ne ſeroit pas plus prudent que la France fit un traité avec les Etats Unis, et que de concert avec eux, elle fit paſſer ici douze ou quinze mille hommes. Ce ſeroit là le moyen de tout gâter. Le peuple ici, quoiqu' en guerre avec les Anglois (nous le voyons journellement), et malgré tout ce que la France a fait, et à intention de faire pour eux, préféreroit de ſe réconcilier avec les Anglois, plutôt que de recevoir des forces de ceux qu'ils ont le plus raiſon de craindre: Ou s'ils y conſentoient d'abord, bientôt après l' antipathie naturelle entre les deux nations, ſe manifeſteroit par les plus terribles diſſentions. Quiconque habite ce pays-ci doit ſavoir que la choſe eſt impracticable.

Il y a encore un projet à examiner. La France, dans le cas où elle ſeroit de faire la guerre aux Anglois ouvertement, ne pourroit-elle pas de concert avec le congrés tenter de prendre le Canada? Par l'obſervation precedente, il eſt naturel de ſuppoſer que le congrés ne voudroit pas accéder à une telle propoſition. Le voiſinage des François les dégouteroit entierement de cette liberté qu' ils croiroient n' être pas capable de garder long-tems; et dépendance pour dépendance, but concerning whom, for gratifying our readers, it may be proper farther to remark, that he had in the war with France from 1754 to 1763,

pendance, ils aimeroient mieux dépendre des Anglois. Mais ſeroit-il avantageux pour nous d' avoir le Canada? Je ſens que pour diſcuter ce point, il faudroit avoir une connoiſſance exacte des productions du pays; ce que je n'ai pas. Enconſiderant la choſe en général, il me paroit que ce qui ſe paſſe maintenant en Amérique doit dégouter les Européens, d' avoir ancune affaire à démêler avec les colonies de ce continent. Car ſoit que les colonies ſe rendent à préſent indépendantes ou non il n'y a pas de doute qu'elles ne le ſoient dans cent ans; et avec elles toutes les parties ſeptentrionales. C'eſt ſe préparer a une guerre certaine, que d'avoir des établiſſemens ici; il me paroit donc plus avantageux pour la France, d' avoir des iſles qu'elle puiſſe plus aiſément contenir ſous ſa domination. Parmi ces iſles, je choiſirois celle dont les productions ne ſont pas naturelles à la France; et qui cependant lui ſont eſſentiellement néceſſaires, comme le ſucre, le caffé, &c. Car d' avoir des colonies qui ne produiſent que du blé, quoi de plus inutile à la France? Elle n'a qu' à bien cultiver ſon terrain, défricher celui qui a été laiſſé inculte, et elle créera chez elle-même des colonies qui ne lui conteront rien à defendre. Je crois par toutes ces raiſons, que ſi la France déclare la guerre à l' Angleterre, ce n'eſt pas le Canada qu'elle doit attaquer; mais la Jamaîque, et les autres poſſeſſions Angloiſes de cette nature. Si elle ne déclare pas la guerre, celle doit employer tous les moyens que la politique lui ſuggerera pour empêcher les Anglois d' avoir jamais plus de vingt cinq mille hommes ici. Nous n'avions durant toute cette campagne, que trente mille hommes, ſavoir, l' armée de Mr. Waſhington qui n'a jamais excédé quinze mille hommes, celle du general Putnam cinq ou ſix mille; et celle de Mr. Gates dix mille. Si l' on trouvoit qu'il fût néceſſaire d'augmenter le tout d' un tiers, je ne crois pas que la choſe fût poſſible.

Je ſuis peut-être Monſeigneur, entré dans un trop grand détail; mais vous pardonnerez la longueur de mes diſſertations, cauſée ſeulement par l'envie que j'ai eue de ſatisfaire vos déſirs, et de rendre mon ſéjour ici auſſi utile qu'il m'eſt poſſible.

J'ai l' honneur d' être,

Monseigneur,

Votre très humble et très obéïſant Serviteur,

DU PORTAIL.

Le congrés m' a élevé au rang de brigadier-général.

TRANS-

1763, been aid-de-camp to prince Ferdinand of Brunſwick, by whom he was held in the higheſt eſtimation. Thus he was undoubtedly bred

TRANSLATION.

To the Count de St. Germain, Miniſter of War (for you only, Sir).

Camp at White Marſh, four Leagues from Philadelphia,
12th November 1777.

SIR,

I HAD the honour to ſend you an accountof the battles of Brandywine and German Town, together with the plans, as well as that of Philadelphia and its environs to the extent of five leagues, that you might be enabled to judge of the ſituation of general Howe. I hope they have come to hand. Hitherto general Howe is not maſter of two ſmall forts in the river, which prevent his veſſels from coming up to the city, and his communication with them, except by means of a by-way I have marked on the map, and from which we ſhall cut him off in the winter, when we have received a reinforcement of victorious troops from the north. We purpoſe, likewiſe, to poſt a body of two or three thouſand men on the other ſide of the Schuylkill. There are already troops in the Jerſeys, ſo that general Howe will be blocked up in Philadelphia, and in danger of dying with hunger, unleſs he reimbarks. But, to ſpeak the truth, we do not expect quite that. He probably will take the forts, if he attacks them properly, and will then have a communication with his ſhipping. Be that as it may, you ſee, Sir, for people who have been twice beaten we are not in ſo very bad plight; for this we are indebted to the ſmall number of Engliſh cavalry, which prevented the enemy from following up their victory, and ſtill more to the woods and other obſtacles by which the country is defended. Now, after the experience of this campaign, it is natural to put this queſtion, Will the Americans ſucceed in obtaining their liberty, or no? In France, where you can only form your judgment from the facts, you will anſwer in the affirmative; we, on the ſpot, who have ſeen how things have gone, think differently. To ſpeak plain, it has not been owing to the good conduct of the Americans that the campaign, upon the whole, has terminated rather fortunately, but to the fault of the Engliſh. It was an egregious error in the Britiſh government, to direct general Burgoyne to traverſe about two hundred leagues, of a wretched and almoſt deſert country, to join the generals Howe and Clinton. The plan might appear grand in the cabinet of London, but miſerable in the opinion of thoſe who had paid attention to the nature of the country. The obſervation is not in conſequence of the event; for you will probably, Sir, call to recollection that, two months ago, I had the honour to write you word, I was well pleaſed the Engliſh oppoſed us here with only ten thouſand men; and that I was in great hopes that general Burgoyne would not effect a junction with general Howe, till it would be no longer poſſible bred in one of the firſt military ſchools in Europe. With ſuch perſonal merit, the advantage of being of the family of Newcaſtle, and alſo

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poſſible to keep the field, and even then with his army half deſtroyed by famine, fatigue, and deſertion, and the daily loſs he would neceſſarily ſuſtain from our troops, and the militia poſted in the woods. The event exceeded my expectations. Had the Engliſh, inſtead of making ſo many diverſions, directed their attack againſt general Waſhington with eighteen or twenty thouſand men, I do not very well know what would have become of us; becauſe, in doubling the number of our troops, we ſhould not have added double ſtrength to our army, and our embarraſſments would have been increaſed threefold.

In looking over the plans of the campaign, if we examine the conduct of general Howe, we ſhall find he has not even done that which he had it in his power to do, as I had the honour to write you word after the battle of Brandywine; for, had he followed up the advantages which that gave him, there had been an end of general Waſhington's army; and, ſince that, all his operations have been carried on ſo ſlowly, and with ſo much timidity, they have become the object of my aſtoniſhment: But, perhaps, he may recollect himſelf; perhaps another general may be ſent from London, and then poſſibly we may not extricate ourſelves ſo well. However, ſince the events which depend on the ſkill of generals cannot be foreſeen, they ſhould make no part of the conjectures we may form for the future; let us pay attention ſolely to the number of troops, and I would hazard my opinion, *that, if the Engliſh could have here thirty thouſand men, they ought to reduce the country.* A ſecond cauſe, which might haſten that reduction, and even operate alone, is the want of warlike ſtores and the neceſſaries of life. With reſpect to the requiſites for carrying on war, the Americans want almoſt every thing; and as to other matters, linen, ſalt, brandy, ſugar, &c. are wanting; and theſe laſt articles are of more importance than one is at firſt aware. Before the war, the American people, though they did not live in luxury, enjoyed in abundance every requiſite to make life comfortable and happy; they paſſed great part of their time either in ſmoking, drinking tea or ſpirituous liquors. Such was the diſpoſition of theſe people. Sore againſt the grain then, as it muſt be of a ſudden, the tranſform into ſoldiers, reduced to lead a life of hardſhips and frugality, it would not be ſurpriſing that they ſhould prefer the yoke of the Engliſh to a liberty purchaſed at the expence of the comforts of life.

You will be aſtoniſhed, Sir, at this language; but ſuch are theſe people, that they move without ſpring or energy, without vigour, and without paſſion for a cauſe in which they are engaged, and which they follow only as the impulſe of the hand that firſt put them in motion directs. There is an hundred times more enthuſiaſm for this revolution in any one coffee-houſe at Paris, than in all the Thirteen Provinces united. It is neceſſary then that France, to accompliſh this revolution, ſhould furniſh theſe people with every requiſite to leſſen the hardſhips of war. True, it will coſt ſome millions; but they will be well laid out in annihilating the power alſo the next in command to ſir William Howe, ſir Henry Clinton was naturally appointed, on the reſignation of ſir William, to the chief command of the Britiſh army.

Sir

power of England, which, when bereft of her colonies, without a navy and without commerce will loſe her conſequence in the world, and leave France without a rival.

Nevertheleſs, there are ſome, and amongſt them the Abbé Raynal in his publication, who think France would not find her account in liberating the Engliſh colonies, that ſhe would run a riſk of loſing her own; but, to any one acquainted with this country, it is evident that ages muſt paſs before ſhe would be in a condition to ſend out a fleet to make conqueſts. The jealouſies between the Provinces (the ſeeds of which are already ſown) will have divided them into ſo many different intereſts and ſtates, that no one of them will be to be feared.

It may be aſked, whether, to bring about the revolution in America, it would not be adviſable for France to make a treaty with the United States, and, in concert with them, croſs over twelve or fifteen thouſand men? That would be the way to mar all. The people here, though at war with the Engliſh (we ſee it every day), and, in ſpite of all that France has done and means to do for them, would prefer a reconciliation with the Engliſh rather than receive in force the men in the world they moſt fear; or, if they ſhould conſent at firſt, it would not be long ere the natural antipathy between the two nations would break out into the moſt terrible diſſenſions * Whoever inhabits this country muſt know the thing to be abſolutely impracticable.

There is yet another project to examine. In the event of France being obliged to carry on the war openly againſt the Engliſh, might not ſhe, in concert with congreſs, attempt Canada? From the preceding obſervation, it is natural to ſuppoſe congreſs would not accede to ſuch an arrangement. The French neighbourhood alone would give them a diſguſt to that liberty which they would apprehend themſelves not long able to preſerve, and dependance for dependance, they had rather be dependant on the Engliſh.

But, would it be very advantageous for us to have Canada? I am ſenſible, to diſcuſs this point, a moſt minute and accurate knowledge of the produce of the country is neceſſary, which I have not; yet, to conſider the thing in general, it appears to me, that what is now going on in America ought to diſguſt every European power from having any concern with colonies on this continent. For, whether the Engliſh colonies become independent or not at preſent, a century hence, no doubt, they will; and, with them, all the northern parts of this continent. It is laying the foundation of certain war to have eſtabliſhments here. It appears to me, then,

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* In confirmation of what M. du Portail has here advanced, we recollect having heard, whilſt we were in America during the war, and from good authority, "that, upon ſome diſagreement with the French, the Americans diſliking the manner in which they conducted themſelves, the people were clamorous for putting arms into the hands of general Burgoyne's ſoldiers, and making a cauſe common with them to drive the French out of the country."

more

Sir William Howe, upon his arrival in England, found that his conduct was generally condemned, and threw himſelf for protection and exculpation into the arms of a party, the oppoſition to government in parliament, who received him with gladneſs, and boldly vindicated his conduct both in and out of the ſenate. Anonymous charges againſt the general were carried into parliament, that thereby the way might be prepared for a parliamentary inquiry into his conduct. He complained, in the houſe of commons, that many ſevere cenſures had been thrown out againſt him, and that miniſters had been ſilent. He alleged, among other charges againſt adminiſtration, that he had not the cordial confidence and ſupport of miniſtry; that

Complains of defamation;

more advantageous for France to have iſlands, which ſhe can eaſily defend from this contagion of independence; and, amongſt the iſlands, I ſhould chuſe that whoſe productions were not natural to France, and which, nevertherleſs, are become eſſentially neceſſary; ſuch as ſugar, coffee, &c. &c.; for to have colonies producing only corn, what could be of leſs uſe to France? She has nothing to do but well till her own lands, to put under the plough thoſe which have hitherto lain uncultivated, and ſhe will create at home colonies which will coſt her nothing to defend.

For all theſe reaſons, I think, ſhould France declare war againſt England, it is not to Canada, but Jamaica and other Engliſh poſſeſſions of that ſort, ſhe ſhould direct her attacks. If ſhe does not declare war, ſhe ſhould employ the beſt means which policy may ſuggeſt to prevent the Engliſh from ever having more than twenty-five thouſand men here. We had no more than thirty thouſand in the whole of this campaign, to wit, the army of Mr. Waſhington never exceeded fifteen thouſand, that of general Putnam five or ſix thouſand, and that of Mr. Gates ten thouſand. Should it be found neceſſary to increaſe the whole a third, I do not know that it could be done. I have perhaps, Sir, in my letter exceeded what you required; but pardon the length of the diſſertations I have gone into, from a deſire to ſatisfy your wiſhes, and render my ſtay here as uſeful as in my power to make it.

With the moſt profound reſpect,
I am, SIR,
Your moſt humble and moſt obedient ſervant,
DU PORTAIL.

Congreſs has promoted me to the rank of brigadier-general.

his orders from government had not been clear, but ambiguous, and ſuch as might be eaſily explained away in caſe of any adverſe accident ariſing from their execution; and that they had concealed from parliament the true ſtate of our affairs in America, promiſing ſucceſs when they knew there was no reaſon to expect it. Lord George Germaine had ſaid, that he had learned from his intelligence the difficulties the Americans were under in raiſing troops; that he hoped that he (ſir William) ſhould be able to get a ſufficient force in Penſylvania for the defence of that province; and that he ſtill hoped that this campaign would be the laſt, "ſo that, in ſpite of my "poſitive aſſurances," ſaid the general, "from the ſpot, the miniſter's "deluſive hopes and conjectures were to influence him in oppoſition "to my certain knowledge." In the animation of debate, the allegations of the general were placed in a ſtronger point of view. Miniſters were charged with having "treacherouſly and traitorouſly deceived "this country; inaſmuch as they had declared to the houſe of "commons, that they had reaſon to expect a ſucceſsful campaign, "when they had it in their pockets, under the general's own hand, "that nothing was to be expected."

With regard to the firſt of theſe charges, reſpecting confidence and ſupport, the vaſt exertions of the miniſter for the American department were recapitulated, and the letters of ſir William Howe acknowledging them. With regard to the ſecond, it was proved, by the correſpondence between the general and the ſecretary for American affairs, that every plan propoſed by the former was ſure to meet with the approbation of the latter; and that ſtronger proof of confidence in a general could not be given by thoſe who employed him, than that he ſhould be left unconſtrained by particular inſtructions, uncontrolled by ſuperior power, at entire liberty to follow his own plans, and proſecute a war according to his own ideas; nor was it ever before made a matter of ſerious complaint againſt a miniſter, that he did not furniſh military plans in detail to a commander in chief, eſpecially when repeated proofs were given of a ſincere diſpoſition to co-operate with the military commander, and furniſh the means of executing whatever plan he might judge to be the moſt expedient for the public ſervice. The ſecretary of ſtate for the American department, in a letter of the twenty-ſecond of October 1776, expreſsly ſays, "His majeſty does not intend that the general, in his "plans of operation, ſhould be confined to any particular province: "His choice of ſituation muſt in that reſpect be governed by his "own judgment." How many times, it was farther urged on this ſubject, did ſir William Howe alter his plan for the campaign of 1777 in the courſe of a few months? Between the months of November and April no leſs than four plans, eſſentially different from each other, were propoſed, and yet, by the general's own account, each of them, in its turn, was approved of. The miniſter for American affairs, in a letter to the general of the third of March 1777, ſays, "I am now commanded to acquaint you that the king entirely "approves of your deviation from the plan which you formerly "ſuggeſted." And again, May the eighteenth, "As you muſt, from "your ſituation and military ſkill, be a competent judge of the pro"priety of every plan, his majeſty does not heſitate to approve the "alterations which you propoſe." The nature of the American ſervice, indeed, required that the general ſhould be at liberty to vary his plan of operations according to the varying circumſtances of the war: And accordingly, as appears from the whole of the official correſpondence on the ſubject of the American war, the fulleſt confidence was placed in ſir William Howe from the time of his appointment to the chief command to that of his aſking leave to return to Britain. Not only was he ſupported by the whole weight of government, but was indulged in all his wiſhes for himſelf and his friends. On this head, therefore, they who ſaw more matter

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of accuſation in the inactivity and blunders of ſir William Howe, than in the conduct of lord George Germaine, which ſeemed, on the whole, to be well deſigned, and towards the general full of confidence and generoſity, enjoyed a complete triumph. It was with greater plauſibility that ſir William and his friends inſiſted on the third charge, juſt mentioned, againſt the miniſter; that his hopes and conjectures, reſpecting the ſtate of America and the iſſue of the war, were more ſanguine and favourable than the general's correſpondence warranted him to entertain. Yet, even here, it was ſhewn from their correſpondence, that the miniſter's intelligence was not materially different from that of the general, nor his hopes of ſucceſs on the whole much leſs lively.

Still, however, the friends of ſir William Howe, the members of parliament in oppoſition to adminiſtration, with his concurrence, inſiſted on a public inquiry into the conduct of the American war, that our national diſgraces and misfortunes might be traced to their real ſource. Lord Howe, in a ſpeech in the houſe of commons, April the twenty-ninth, 1779, demanded an inquiry into his own and his brother's conduct, for the following reaſons: They had been arraigned in pamphlets and in newſpapers, written by perſons in high credit and confidence with miniſters, by ſeveral members of that houſe, in that houſe, in the face of the nation; by ſome of great credit and reſpect in their public characters, known to be countenanced by adminiſtration; and that one of them in particular, governor Johnſtone, had made the moſt direct and ſpecific charges. Their characters, therefore, ſo publicly attacked, and in ſuch a place, were to be vindicated in the great councils of the ſtate, and no-where elſe.

and ſolicits and obtains a parliamentary inquiry into his conduct.

In vain did the miniſters of the crown, who had employed him, declare, that they had no accuſations againſt either the general or admiral. They, with their friends, inſiſted on a public examination, which was obtained, and in which they, for ſome time, took the lead.

But, at length it plainly appeared that, under pretence of vindicating the general, their real deſign was to condemn the conduct of adminiſtration. The parliamentary inquiry that had been inſtituted, the miniſtry and their adherents conſidered as a factious intrigue.

It was, perhaps, imagined that his majeſty, alarmed at the dangers that began, by this time, to threaten Great Britain, not only in America, but in other quarters, would change his confidential ſervants, and commit the conduct of government to thoſe very hands that hitherto had been employed in various attempts to baffle its deſigns, and fruſtrate all the meaſures that had been taken for carrying them into execution. But the king, amidſt multiplying diſtreſſes, with proper firmneſs withſtood their machinations, determined to continue his countenance to thoſe who wiſhed not to fruſtrate nor procraſtinate the war *, but to bring it, as ſoon as poſſible, to a ſafe and honourable concluſion. The oppoſition, therefore, diſappointed in their expectations from the higheſt quarter in the ſtate, ſeriouſly intended, what they loudly threatened, to impeach the ſervants of the crown, and by that means to drive them from their places by a kind of violence.

Adminiſtration, eaſily penetrating this deſign, reſolved no longer to permit their opponents to run in the race of examination alone, but to vindicate the meaſures they had taken. Many gentlemen of undoubted reputation, perfectly acquainted with the conduct of the war, and the ſtate of America, were ſummoned to give evidence reſpecting thoſe ſubjects. Of this the movers of the inquiry were apprized, and they ſoon began to loſe courage. Only two witneſſes were examined, on what may be called, in the language of judicial trials, the ſide of adminiſtration: Major-general Robertſon, who had ſerved twenty-

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* It is believed that the king on ſome occaſions went ſo far as to ſuggeſt his ideas of the proper plan for carrying on the war, which were very judicious, and which, had they been adopted by the general, might probably have been productive of good effects.

four years in America as quarter-maſter-general, brigadier and major-general; and Mr. Galloway, a gentleman of Penſylvania, of fortune and conſequence, as well as good abilities, who was bred to the law, and had been a member of congreſs, but who had come over to the royal army in December 1776. But ſuch was the circumſtantiality, credibility, and weight of their evidence, that the movers or managers ſhrunk from the inquiry; as, the more it was carried on, the more parliament, as well as the nation at large, ſeemed to be convinced that the conduct of adminiſtration, in reſpect to the American war, was on the whole juſtified. The friends of the general and admiral, therefore, moved to diſſolve the committee which they had been ſo ſtudious to obtain; and it was diſſolved accordingly.

But although ſir William Howe, as well as his friends, was diſappointed in his hopes of ſomething even more than exculpation, from an indulgent houſe of commons, he neither wanted a ſufficient number of partiſans to keep him in countenance amidſt all that cenſure that was poured on his conduct, nor political friends of ſufficient conſequence to compenſate for that cenſure by an honourable and lucrative ſtation which he now holds under government: Nor is this the only inſtance in the hiſtory of Britain at this period, of great inequality in the public retribution of rewards and puniſhments. When we reflect on the different and even oppoſite reception given to ſucceſsful genius actuated by the pureſt patriotiſm on the one hand, and to monotonous mediocrity, not only unſucceſſful, if ſucceſs is to be meaſured by effects conducive to the public good, but even of ambiguous intentions; what are we to think of the ſpirit which influences and directs the public councils?

In the decline of free governments we ever obſerve the influence of faction to predominate over ideas of patriotiſm, juſtice, and duty, on which alone liberty is founded, and a propenſity in the citizens to range themſelves under the banners of a Marius or a Sylla, a

Pompey or a Cæſar. Hence the ſervants of the ſtate are apt to become leſs and leſs ſenſible to honour, and the voice of fame, the great incentives to glorious actions, well knowing that their conduct, however meritorious, may ſtill be condemned, or however exceptionable, ſtill be palliated, and even applauded, to advance the views of faction and ambition; while the great body of the people, diſtracted and confounded by the oppoſite opinions and declarations of their ſuperiors, who are ſuppoſed to have the beſt means of information, know not where to place their hopes, their confidence, or their fears.

It is the province of the hiſtorian to correct theſe errors, and to animate the patriot, the ſage, and the hero, under temporary neglect or detraction, by carrying an appeal in their behalf to a tribunal more candid than their miſguided cotemporaries, and that, raiſed on a theatre more extended than their native country.

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